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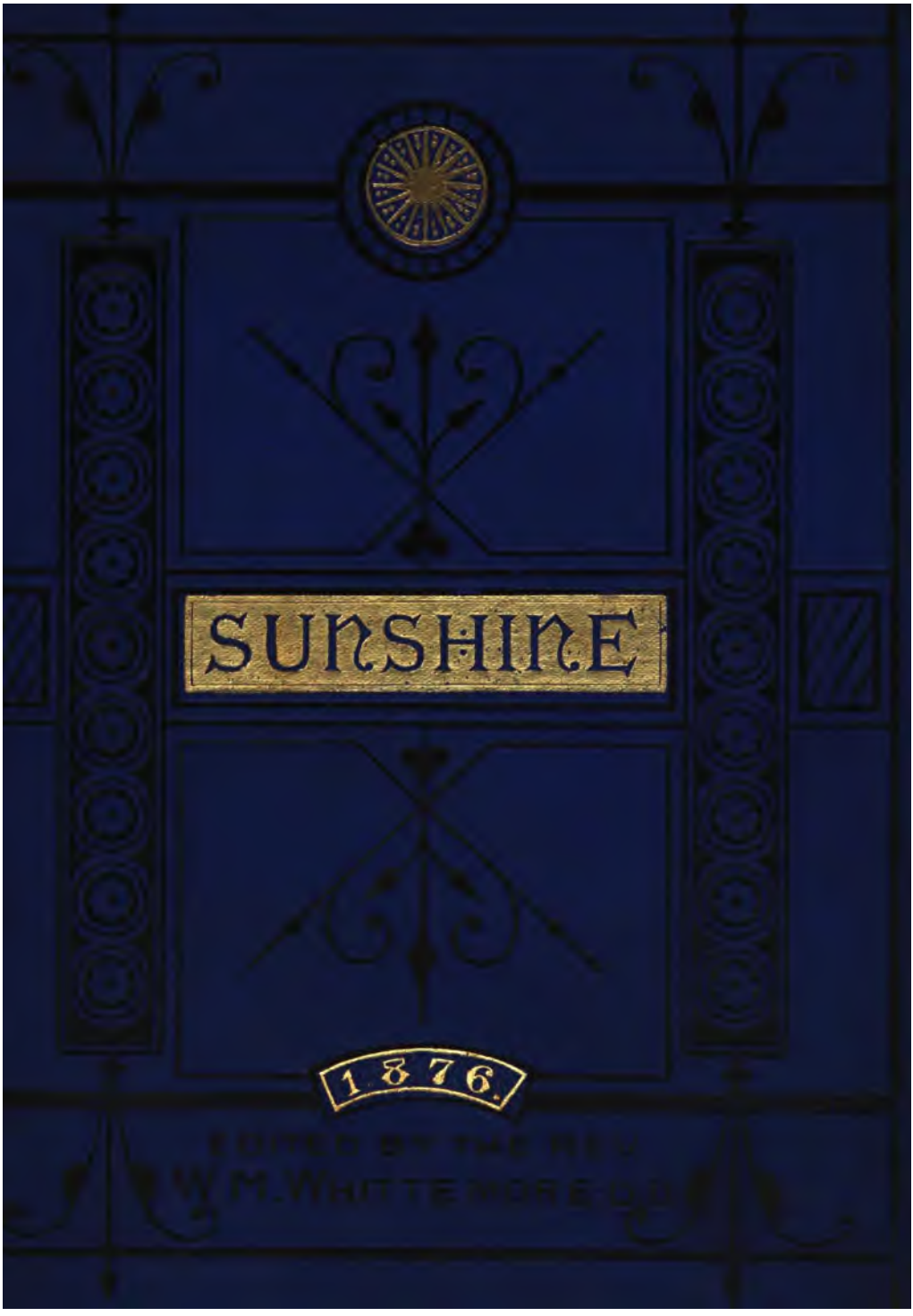
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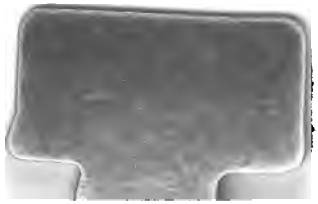

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# 1876.

"FOR THE HOME, THE SCHOOL, AND THE WORLD."

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EDITED BY W. M. WHITTEMORE, D.D., RECTOR OF ST. KATHERINE CREE, LONDON.

No. 169. JANUARY, 1876. [ONE PENNY.

[ALINE AND THE GIPSY CHILD.]

## LITTLE ALINE.

A STORY OF GIPSY LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PET'S DIFFICULTIES."

### CHAPTER I.—HOW THE CAKE WAS MADE.

"SIX eggs, Margaret! Will it want so many?"

"Yes, for a nice cake, dear; a birthday cake for papa."

Ethel silently watched the breaking of the eggs, one by one, into a teacup, from which they were passed into a large white basin, and then the beating of them to a froth was entrusted to her small hands. Judging by the serious looks of the little girl, this was evidently a very important part of the business to her; and she began mingling the yellow yolks and snowy whites together, with an earnestness of manner that befitted the occasion.

But the stirring of the eggs seemed also to stir some thoughts in her mind, for as she rested for a minute from her labours, she said rather doubtfully to Margaret, "I wonder whether papa will like my cake?"

"Oh, he is sure to like it; especially as it is your making."

"I do not know," said Ethel; "papa is not often pleased with anything I do. He is so different from mamma."

"Yes, dear, of course he is. Gentlemen have such a many grave things to attend to, that they cannot think much about a little girl's doings."

"Can they think more about a little boy's doings?"

"I suppose one is as easy as the other," said Margaret, laughing. She did not take in the child's meaning, and thought her question was only one of the curious ones which she so frequently asked.

"Because papa was never too busy to notice dear little Charlie's funny ways; and whenever he trotted into the library, and called out 'Papa! papa!' he always used to catch him up in his arms, and give him lots of kisses. But if I go in to show him anything, he says, 'Run away directly, Ethel, I cannot have you come disturbing me like this.'"

The contrast was too plain for Margaret to deny it, so she tried to smooth matters as well as she could. "Master Charlie is such a tiny baby boy," she said, "that he could not be made to understand that he is a hindrance to your papa; but you are so much bigger and wiser, Miss Ethel, you can easily see why your papa does not like being interrupted."

Ethel was only partly satisfied. "He might have me in *sometimes*," she said, wistfully. "When dear little Charlie went away, I did think that perhaps papa would then take more notice of *me*."

"He will by and by, dear," said Margaret, in a cheerful tone. "He has hardly got over the loss of your little brother yet; and now you know he is very poorly himself."

"Yes, he is in bed to-day. I peeped in at him as I went downstairs, but he did not see me, so I could not give him a kiss."

She spoke very quietly, but Margaret could tell from her tone how the child's heart craved for the love that was denied her; and it pained her to think that Ethel had any real ground for her complaint about her father. But she thought it was wiser not to let her dwell on the subject, so she turned it at once by saying that the eggs were now beautifully light, and quite ready to be mixed with the other ingredients. Ethel forgot everything else in her anxiety about her cake.

At length it was all ready to be put into the oven, and she followed Margaret into the back kilchen, where there was a real baker's oven, built of brick, and heated with fagots of wood. It was already half filled with a variety of good things, bread, meat pies, fruit tarts, turn-overs, and cakes, for Margaret never baked more than twice, and sometimes only once during the week; so she had to prepare plenty at a time, for there were many hungry mouths to be filled in her household.

Ethel saw that her cake was safely deposited in the hot cavern, and then she turned away with a sigh of relief at her great undertaking being completed, and took off the holland apron with bib, that Margaret had carefully pinned round her silk frock. Before she went into the next room again Margaret placed a bowl of water before her, and a clean towel that smelt of lavender, that she might wash her hands, and give over playing at housekeeping. Not that Ethel called it "play;" cake-making was serious, right-down work to her.

"I am so glad I came on baking day, Margaret! All days are nice here, but this is the very best."

"How would you like to live at the farm?" said Margaret.

"Without mamma, do you mean?"

"I was not thinking of your mamma at that minute. Just suppose you had not any mamma."

"Oh, then I should like it very much, Margaret, it's the loveliest place, I think, in the world."

"I am afraid you are saying that to please me,' said Margaret, smiling.

"No indeed, Margaret, I really mean it. Why, I never saw a more comfortable house, and this is such a dear little room, we have not got one at home that I like half so well."

The "dear little room" had a low ceiling, high wainscot painted green, a wall-paper covered with roses and bright little birds, and a large old-fashioned bow-window, filled with old-fashioned plants in vermilion pots. The carpet had seen its best days, the chairs were solid rather than showy, and the chief ornaments were a china shepherd and shepherdess on the mantelshelf, and two or three illuminated Scripture texts which Ethel's mamma had painted and had given to Margaret. The grand rooms in Ethel's home would all have turned up their noses (if they had had any to turn) at this simple farmhouse apartment. But some of Ethel's happiest hours were spent in that quaint little room, and so she preferred it to any other. She was, fortunately, not yet old enough to value things merely according to the money that they were worth.

It was just dinner-time. Margaret looked out of the bow-window to see whether her husband was on his way home. He was crossing the second field that fronted the house. So Margaret called to Patty, the stout rosy-cheeked girl in the kitchen, and told her to make haste and peel the potatoes that were steaming in their brown jackets.

"May I go and meet Philip?" asked Ethel.

"Yes, if you like, dear, only don't go without your hat, the sun is so warm." Ethel was in the habit of running in and out of the farm as she pleased, and she did not mind as much as her mamma and Margaret did about getting herself sunburnt; this was why Margaret cautioned her about her hat.

Margaret watched her across the road and into the field, saying to herself, "Poor little girl! I

think she will be happy with us;" and then she walked into her neat little kitchen to see that Philip's dinner was properly dished up.

Ethel bounded along the grass towards the young farmer who wasreturning fromhis morning's work. He was a fine, healthy-looking young man with a face as open as the day, and a kind smile that won the hearts of all children. Ethel liked Philip very much, and she, in her turn, was one of his especial favourites.

"Well, little housekeeper, and where is the grand cake?" he said, as he grasped the hand which Ethel half breathlessly held out to him. For, of course, everybody at the farm that morning had heard of the wonderful feat that Miss Ethel was about to accomplish.

"It is in the oven still, but it is nearly baked," answered Ethel, gaily. And she went on describing very minutely each step in the process of her cake-making, in which Philip professed to be greatly interested; though I fear that he was not much wiser at the end than he was at the beginning, and would have been sadly at a loss had he tried to manufacture one.

"And how would you like to be a farmer's wife, Miss Ethel?" he said presently.

"Oh, very much," answered the little girl, "it would be such fun! I should have a poultry-yard, and a dairy, and a lot of dear little chickens, and plenty of eggs and cream; and I should give milk away to the poor people as Margaret does; and I should have large store-rooms, full of apples and pears, for the winter."

Thus Ethel chattered till they reached the farm and sat down to dinner. But as she was eating her pudding, and Philip, and Margaret were speaking to each other about some farm business, Ethel remembered how they had both asked her that morning, whether she would like to lead the same sort of life that they were leading. Were these questions only chance ones, she thought, or did they mean anything? Of course, she could not be going to live with *them*; and it was equally absurd to suppose that her papa would buy a farm, and that she and her mamma would live there with him. Fancy her papa turned into a farmer like Philip Atherton! And Ethel smiled to herself, and finished her pudding in peace.

## Chapter II.—Little Charlie.

Ethel Raymond was an only child; at least, she was the only child of her parents now living. A few months before our story begins she had had a sweet little brother about two years old. Her father was a cold reserved man, who never seemed to care for his little girl. And yet she was a child of whom any father might have been proud. With a fair complexion and pretty features, her face wore a thoughtful and intelligent look; and her manners were so pleasing that strangers were at once attached towards *her. But Mr.* Raymond had always left her chiefly to her mother, while he petted and indulged his darling boy. He was passionately fond of his little son, and lavished all his affection upon him. The little fellow was sadly spoilt; every wish of his was immediately gratified, and he was rarely if ever contradicted.

Ethel was not at all jealous of him. He was a boy, and he was such a baby, therefore it was quite right, she thought, that he should have his own way. So she willingly gave up her will to his, and was always ready to play with and to amuse him.

But Charlie's life was a very short one. God took him to a brighter home above, where he was far happier than when he was running about here. Perhaps God saw that it would not be well for him to live and grow up; he might wander away from all that was good; or perhaps it was to draw the heart of the father toward Himself, that the Good Shepherd gathered this little lamb into His heavenly fold. At all events, Jesus called the little child unto Him, and Charlie went with a smile. He was only ill for a few hours, and almost before any danger was apprehended the child was gone from them.

It was a terrible blow to his father and mother. But though Mrs. Raymond's grief was, perhaps, as keen as that of her husband, it was not so rebellious, and was more easily soothed. He thought it hard, very hard, that his boy, who was the sunshine of his life, should be parted from him; and he not only "refused to be comforted," but he murmured against God's will. He had hoped—nay, he had expected that his child would grow up to be the comfort and support of his old age; and he had formed to himself many bright pictures of Charlie's boyhood, and youth, and manhood. And now all those pictures were blotted out for ever, and the future looked dark and dreary without him.

It would only have been natural had he let his little girl fill the vacancy in his heart. But instead of doing so, he seemed at first as if he could scarcely bear her in his sight. She reminded him of his loss, and brought it more vividly before him.

And though time was gradually softening his trouble, yet he showed no wish to have Ethel more with him. He was not unkind to her; he brought her heaps of toys and story-books, and he liked her to be nicely dressed; but Ethel was of a warm, affectionate disposition, and she missed the tender love which is a child's rightful portion.

Happily, she found what she wanted in her mamma, for Mrs. Raymond was a fond devoted mother, and made quite a companion of her little girl.

But there were changes close at hand, both for mother and child.

## Chapter III.—Ethel and Rover.

After dinner Philip rode over to a neighbouring farm, and Margaret and her maid Patty pre-

pared for two or three hours ironing. The young mistress of the farm certainly did not eat the bread of idleness, and she looked well to the ways of her household. But the clear fire heated the irons so quickly, and the piles of snowy linen looked so white, and smelt so sweet, that it really did not seem any hardship to smooth them over before putting them away in the drawers.

Ethel, indeed, rather envied the workers: she thought ironing was a most delightful occupation; but then, you see, she had never tried it, except once when she ironed her doll's best pocket handkerchief, and burnt the corner of it so that she was scarcely fit to judge. I think that she had the nicest time of it that afternoon, for she soon tired of looking at the ironers; and, with Margaret's permission, she put on her large straw hat, and went out to gather wild flowers. Whenever she was at the farm she always picked wild flowers for Margaret's white vase that stood on the parlour table.

"Let Rover go with you, dear, and then I shall be sure that you are safe."

"All right!" answered Ethel, who was quite as willing to have her four-footed friend as he was to accompany his young lady. He was a handsome black dog, as gentle as a lamb when not on guard, but as fierce as a lion in defending whatever was given into his care. So that Margaret was always easy, however far the child rambled, if she knew that Rover was at her side. Ethel was well used to the farm and its surroundings. She was accustomed, whenever she stayed with Margaret, to run out of doors pretty much as she pleased. There was seldom any one about, except the men who worked on the farm; and if she wandered in the lanes she only met the villagers, most of whom were well acquainted with the little lady from the Hall.

Rover walked soberly beside her, with his head erect, as if he were duly impressed with the importance of his charge. But he soon found it hard to maintain his dignity; for Ethel danced along in one of her merriest moods; singing snatches of lively little songs, talking all sorts of nonsense to Rover, and slily pulling his ears now and then in order to banish his seriousness. He tried to resist her charms; but what dog could long hold out against them? In a few minutes he was scampering around her, wagging his tail in ecstasy; and the next instant he was racing over the meadow, as if he were trying to win a wager!

"Oh, Rover! what would your master say if he saw your antics?" exclaimed Ethel, as she raced after him, caught him at last, and hugged him tightly round the neck. "Taking care of me, indeed, sir, it is I who have to take care of you!"

Rover looked half ashamed of himself, but there was a comical glance in his eye which seemed to say, "I do not think there is a pin to choose between us!" and then Ethel laughed heartily, and *Rover* wagged his tail again, as if he thoroughly *enjoyed the fun.*

It was a bright afternoon, but there was a fresh breeze, and a few soft clouds in the sky, which made the heat, not only bearable, but pleasant. Ethel began to look for her wild flowers. She wanted to find out the less common ones, and the prettiest grasses, so that it generally took her some time to fill the rustic basket that was hanging on her arm. Sometimes Rover obligingly carried the basket in his mouth, in order that she might be at liberty to reach after any half-hidden beauties that she wished to secure. For Ethel was intent now upon her work. She wished to surprise Margaret with her treasures.

So she gambolled no more with Rover, but kept gathering the finest specimens around her; repeating while she did so a piece of poetry which she had learnt of her own accord out of an old book. I will copy two of the verses for you.

"Gathering flowers! gathering flowers!
Pleasant pastime for leisure hours;
Yet thou shouldst not stay
All the sunny day
In thy rose-encircled and thick-leaved bowers.
Canst thou not hear midst thy careless glee,
Sweet, solemn voices calling thee?"

"Calling thee forth to toil and strife,
To live a new and nobler life;
With an earnest heart
To fulfil thy part
In a world with sin and sorrow rife.
Arouse thyself and exert thy powers,—
Why idlest thou amongst the flowers?"

It was not at all a child's piece,—too difficult for most children either to like or to understand. But Ethel was, in some respects, a singular little girl. She would play with her family of dolls as contentedly as if she were only three years old, and seemed almost babyish in some of her ways; but at other times she talked as old-fashioned as a woman of fifty, and astonished you by the thoughtful remarks that she made.

Ethel strayed further than usual that afternoon. She had just found a more promising spot, and was stretching out her hand to a cluster of bright red berries that grew at the top of a tall hedge, when Rover pricked up his ears, and began sniffing about, without any apparent reason. There were thick bushes and a good deal of tangled underwood at that end of the field leading into the lane; and Ethel followed Rover's movements, thinking that he had perhaps discovered some lame little bird, or some stray rabbit. He seemed very uneasy, and poked his nose here and there in evident perplexity.

All of a sudden he rushed round a large old tree close by and a loud furious bark proclaimed that his search was successful.

Ethel hastened after him, and saw, to her surprise, a little girl about her own size, curled up, half asleep, on a heap of leaves that had drifted

under the trees. The bark of the dog had roused her from her slumbers, and there was a frightened, as well as a startled look on her face, for Rover seemed quite ready to spring upon her.

"Down, sir! down!" said Ethel, in a tone of command, and she was instantly obeyed.

"Don't be afraid, little girl, he won't hurt you," she added, consolingly. The child sat up on her soft bed, rubbed her eyes, and murmured her thanks.

Ethel saw in a minute that she was a little gipsy girl. Her black hair, sparkling eyes, and dark complexion showed this, and the gay ornaments she wore helped to prove it. She had gold earrings, strings of beads round her throat, and the round comb that drew her hair back from her forehead was adorned with pearls, either real or imitation. A strange, bright little figure she looked as she fixed her shining eyes on Ethel's fair face.

## STORY OF A CANARY.

MOST children are fond of hearing about birds, so I have written a little story about a canary, one that belongs to my sister. He is of a most beautiful bright yellow colour; my sister had him when quite young. He is very tame indeed, and comes out of his cage every day. He is very fond of nuts; when he hears any one crack them he will (if his cage door is open) immediately fly on the person's hand who has the nut, and begin to eat it; or if his door is not open he will come down to it expecting you to open it and give him a nut. He will then take it up to a little feeding tin, which my father has made for him to put titbits in such as meat, sweet's, &c. Dicky always puts any little bits that are given him into it himself. He comes out at every meal-time, and either feeds off some one's plate on the table or pitches on their shoulder expecting to be fed out of their mouth. Then if they do not take any notice of him, he will fly to the front of their face and back to their shoulder, that they may see that he is waiting to be fed by them; and he does, I can assure you, get fed quickly.

This canary has some little bells at the top of his cage, and when he wants to be taken notice of he will ring them pretty sharply, and sometimes before he is let out we wait until he does ring.

His singing is not like a canary's in general, because he has so many different notes; he imitates my father in his whistle so well, that if you were not in the same room with them you could not tell the difference between the voices. He will sometimes commence his tune by whistling; then he will make a noise as if he were kissing some one; he will then say, "Pretty dear dick." "Pretty dear creature." "Pretty dear dear," and whistle and talk to the end of his tune, which is not very short sometimes.

If before he *sees any one in* the morning you call to him before entering the room, and say, "Where is the Dicky?" he will answer so quickly, saying in his manner, "Here I am." He will let you catch him at any time. He is not at all particular where he sings,—sometimes on the top of the door, sometimes on our fingers or shoulders. He calls my sister (Annie) quite plainly, and if she goes out of the room, he calls and whistles for her until she comes back. He is very fond of children and will begin to kiss and sing to them as soon as he sees them. He is never better pleased than when he is out of his cage among our work: he will hop on our hands while we are at needlework and pull at our cotton and needle; then if we go on working while he is there he will make a little noise as if to scold us, because he likes to have his own way. Anything he can do for mischief pleases him.

He is very fond of hopping on a glass of water to take a bath, and when he does he always gets on some one to dry himself. It would be difficult to count all his little tricks.

All this was done by kindness; if Dicky had not been treated kindly he would not have done all the things of which I have told you.

EMILY.

## THE NEW YEAR RESOLVE.

I CANNOT go alone, my Lord,
I dare not go alone
Through earth's entangled wilderness,
With briars and thorns o'ergrown.
I lean upon no earthly prop,
Thine arm is all my stay,
Until the night is ended,
And shadows flee away.

I cannot go alone, my Lord,
I dare not go alone;
My trembling heart would fail me,
My strength be overthrown.
For oh! I grow so weary
Of all the sins and strife,
My soul is yearning, yearning,
For home and light and life.

I cannot go alone, my Lord,
I dare not go alone;
I cast me on Thy perfect strength,
My utter weakness own.
Upon Thy heart I'm resting,
Thine arm is round me thrown;
Thanks for the love that aye forbids
Thy child to go alone.

I cannot go alone, my Lord,
I dare not go alone;
Dark clouds are looming o'er me,
The hollow night-winds moan.
Closer to Thee, still closer,
Bid my poor heart "be still,"
Teach me to trust Thy love alone,
Alone to do Thy will.

LELIA.

# LILY, THE LITTLE SERVANT GIRL.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART FIRST.

HER real name was Emily, but no one called her by it. Her mother was a widow with a large family of children. Lily had a sister and a brother older than herself, and twin brothers younger than herself, besides a baby sister. It would have been almost impossible for her mother to maintain them all by her own exertions; fortunately, she had not to try to do so. Her husband's brothers had the power and the will to help her. They rented a house and shop for her, stocking the shop with groceries. As soon as her elder children were old enough she procured work for them in a large woollen mill. It was not the kind of employment that she preferred for them, but it was the most remunerative, and it was necessary they should earn as much money as possible, for the shop did not answer as well as she and her brothers-in-law had anticipated, therefore it seemed likely that the little household would be a good deal dependent upon the earnings of the elder children. Happily they were very steady, and desirous of helping their mother. Her brother and sisters being at work, Lily, who came next in age, also wished for employment, so that she too could earn money; but Lily was delicate. Her mother could not think of sending her to the mill, neither did Lily wish to go. She had once been inside the one in which her brother and sister worked, and the noise of the machinery had so frightened her, and the smell of oil had so sickened her, that when she got home she was quite ill.

One day, when the vicar of the parish called to see how they were going on—for he took great interest in them,—the widow told him her difficulty about finding employment for Lily, adding that the child was delicate and only eleven years old, but that any lady would find her useful in her house.

The vicar promised to make inquiries of the ladies in his parish, and if he heard of anything suitable he would let her know.

In the meantime the widow also made inquiries, but heard of no place at all likely for her little daughter. Had the shopkeeping been a success she would have thought no more about it, but have kept the child at home. How it was she could not tell, but the business instead of improving fell away still more than it had done. So her desire to obtain easy employment for Lily became urgent.

At length, after several weeks, she applied again to the vicar, and this time was successful, for she heard what Lily called good news. It was that the vicar's nieces, the two Miss Weatherbys—the widow slightly knew them—had been since *Miss Weatherby's illness in want* of some one to run errands, and to assist their servant in her work. They thought, after hearing about Lily, that she might suit them. They lived near the village of Cackleton, scarcely three miles away, so the widow decided that it would be wisest to go over and see them. Accordingly, the next day she went. The ladies agreed to take Lily a month on trial, and a few days after, the child, accompanied by her mother, left home for her place, as she proudly called it.

They arrived at Miss Weatherby's during the afternoon, and after some refreshment and an interview with the ladies it was time for Mrs. Taylor, Lily's mother, to return.

When her mother had gone Lily felt very sorrowful; she thought that going out to service was not very nice after all.

Just as she had resolved not to fret, Miss Weatherby's bell rang, and Mary, the servant, told her that she would be expected to answer it.

Lily was very glad then that she had not shed tears, for she would not like to have shown herself to her mistress with red eyes.

Miss Weatherby being an invalid, though not seriously ill—but it was feared that she might become so—Miss Lucy Anne, her sister, attended to the housekeeping, and it was she who had arranged Lily's duties.

Both sisters were quite young. They had inherited their house and furniture from their aunt, with whom they had lived after the death of their parents. She had been dead but a few years, and besides her house and furniture, had left her nieces all she possessed, which though not enough to make them great heiresses, was enough to keep them quite comfortably. For a time an elderly lady had lived with them as housekeeper and chaperon, but she had recently left them, and her place had not yet been supplied.

Lily soon discovered that her situation would not be quite as enviable a one as she had expected. It was not that she had too much work to do, she had much more to do at home; but her mother's house was, of course, very different from that of her mistress. There were many things in her mistress's which she did not know the use of, and which she had never seen before, therefore she would have been glad if Mary, the servant, would have borne this in mind, but she did not. She would tell the child what to do, without giving her the least idea how to do it. Then when Lily asked for directions, would say crossly, "Dear, dear! to think that a girl as old as you doesn't know how to do a simple thing like that! I'd be ashamed of myself."

Lily thought that there was no cause for shame in not knowing how to do what she had never been taught to do or even seen done, but the constant repetition of such speeches day after day were hard to bear patiently. Lily, however, tried to be patient, and generally succeeded.

Though Mary was certainly very provoking, she never pertly answered her,—on the contrary, was

ready to do her a kindness on the first opportunity. Mary had been many years in her present situation, having been with old Miss Weatherby, as she called her, years before her present mistresses came to live with her, so she was a person of some importance, or thought that she was, and she imagined that Lily would need much keeping in order,—girls always did, she said; and Mary seemed to think that she had full authority over the child. It was a pity that what authority she had she did not exercise more kindly. Poor Lily! she made the first days of her service, very, very sorrowful, just when the trial of leaving home needed no additional grief. Some of her duties Lily liked very much, but one gave her great trouble.

A recent acquisition of her mistresses was a fine goat. The doctors had recommended Miss Weatherby to drink goat's milk, they thought it would be beneficial to her; so Miss Lucy determined that they would keep a goat themselves. There was the stable empty, and adjoining the garden was a small field. Nothing is needed but the goat, thought Miss Lucy, and forthwith employed a person to buy them one. Its price was £2, which was cheerfully paid, and Nanny was taken into the clean stable. Then occurred the question of milking her. Fortunately Mary, who in her youth had been accustomed to milking cows, amiably volunteered to milk Nanny, and succeeded in doing so; but she found that Nanny had not by any means a sweet temper; indeed, I am sorry to say that it was a very bad one. Every one who came near her she tried to butt, and very often did butt, unless they stepped nimbly out of her way. A collar and chain was bought for her, which Mary, who had no fear of her, put on in the stable, and led her triumphantly to the field. Throughout the day, in summer, she was fastened by a strong tethering pin under a tree, for shade and coolness.

Miss Weatherby did not at first like the milk, she said that it had a bitter taste; but she soon acquired a liking for it, and it did her much good.

Now after Lily came Mary resolved to herself that she should attend to Nanny, and what Mary fully determined should be done generally was done.

The little girl knew nothing of goats, had never even seen one before, therefore she had no idea that Nanny might have naughty tricks, and when she saw her lying on the grass quietly chewing her cud, she went up to her to pet her and be friendly. Much to her astonishment, however. Nanny did not receive her civilities graciously, but, after her usual custom, would have butted if she could.

It was not very pleasant to Lily, the next evening, to be told that she must have her first lesson in learning to milk her. Mary no doubt saw how frightened she was, but chose to take no notice.

After a few days the little girl found that the more afraid she was of Nanny, the more liberties Nanny took, so she put on a brave appearance, and the goat behaved better; and then Lily won her good opinion by bringing her small branches of trees, the leaves of which she was very fond of, and after Miss Lucy had bought a brush and comb for her, Lily completed her conquest by a frequent use of it,—Nanny would have stood for hours to be brushed.

Before the little girl's trial month was over she and the goat had become very good friends.

The first week after leaving home had seemed a very long one to Lily. She had never before been separated from her mother and sisters and brothers. She wondered if "Baby"—they called her baby, though she was a little girl of four years of age—missed her, and how her mother got on without her.

Her mistresses had promised her a holiday at the month's end, and Lily was delighted at the thought of going home. She did not know whether the Miss Weatherbys intended to keep her or not. She hoped they would, for they were most kind to her; if Mary would only be a little kinder, how happy she should be! Lily had no idea that her own good humour and patience were making a great impression upon Mary, but so it was. She did not know the source of Lily's amiability, and was often secretly astonished that the child could bear her sharp and taunting speeches so quietly and patiently, never answering again.

It was a lovely morning, the day of Lily's promised holiday, and by eight o'clock she had had her breakfast, and when she was ready to start Miss Lucy went into the garden to cut her some flowers she had promised her. She cut roses red, white, and yellow, sweet-briar, violets, lilies of the valley, mignonette, till Lily had as many as her hand would hold. How sweet they smelt! and there were a few drops of dew still upon them. Lily thought never were more beautiful flowers seen before. As she walked—or rather danced along the road, she was too gleeful for sober walking—she pictured to herself her mother's delight at sight of them.

## RULES FOR THE PICTURE STORY.

1. Write a story which includes all the incidents given in the pictures; but do not introduce other incidents which are unnecessary to the completeness of the story.

2. Only one side of the paper to be written on. Use any sized paper you please. We do not like coloured paper, and are no admirer of foolscap.

3. No one is to help you.

4. Put your name, age, and address at the end of your solution; not on a separate piece of paper.

5. The best paper will be printed in this magazine in the next month but one; that is, the best solution of the January story will appear in March. We have to go to press so early on account of our large sale, that we cannot insert the solutions before.

6. The best solution means the best written one, which is also most correct, and free from blots.

## THE KING'S HEAD.

### SOLUTION OF THE EIGHTY-THIRD PICTURE STORY.

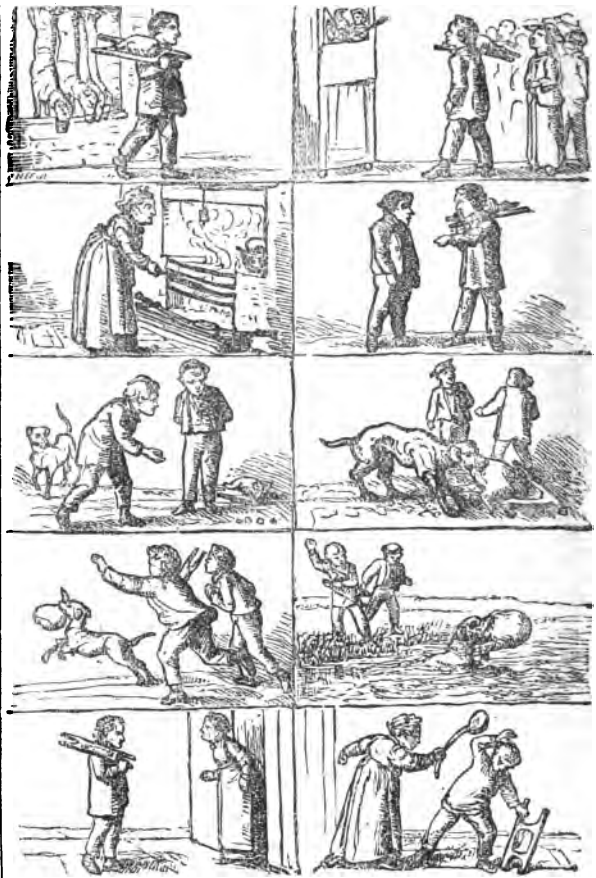
In the time of the Commonwealth, in the town of Brighton (which was then a little fishing village) there stood a small tavern at the corner of West Street. The host, whose name was John Smith, was a jolly, good-natured old man. One day as he was standing outside his house he saw walking along the road a gentleman dressed in very handsome clothes, such as were only worn by the nobility. The gentleman seemed to be looking very anxiously about, stopping now and then to look behind him, as if afraid some one was following. As he was passing John he looked hard at him, but passed on; presently he turned back and passed again, and at last came up and asked him if he were a man to be trusted with a secret. John, very much pleased that a gentleman of so high a rank should ask him such a question, said he thought he was, he had had a few trusted to him before now. Then the gentleman stooped down and whispered to John, telling him that he was his king, Charles II., who was fleeing from his enemies. John was proud to see his king (for he was a loyal subject); he quickly took him in and gave him the best of everything, offering it to him with bended knee.

John kept a sharp look-out for the king's pursuers. One day as he was looking out anxiously, having heard that soldiers were in the town, he saw three coming towards him, so he went hastily in and warned the king. Charles was very frightened, but John told him that there was a secret cupboard under the staircase. The king quickly crept in, and had hardly entered when he heard the soldiers come in; they searched the house, but did not find him.

After many such hair-breadth escapes Charles at last reached Shoreham, where he engaged an honest, loyal captain, whose name was Tattersall, to take him across to France. As Charles was going to step into the boat he turned round and bid farewell to England, and then got in, and went bounding over the sparkling waves to France.

John Smith had the name of his tavern altered to "The King's Head," he also had a beautiful king's head painted as a sign-board. The tavern has borne that name ever since.

*Brighton.* BERTHA M. B. (13.)



## PICTURE STORY.

### No. LXXXV.

HONOURABLE MENTION.—Gertrude M. G., Bessie C. M. D., Helen and Lily M., Mary G. C., Elizabeth W. D., Etta J. B., Florence A. L., Lucy M. W., Mabel F. S. E., Ethel L. M., Florence S. M. L., Wilhelmina Y., Caroline A. P., Catherine W. H. J., Marie A. M., Elizabeth A. B., Alice E. S., Annie F. H., Athena I., Sallie B., Katie A., Alice B. B., Ada F. B., Grace F. R., Frances B., Herbert W. M., Laurie M., Frank L. P., Percy B., Charles C., Harry A. F. W., Henry J. P., Richard P., Arthur T. V. B., Gregor V. S. T.

The solution should be sent, addressed to the Editor, at 24, Paternoster Row, London, not later than the eighth of the month. We are much obliged for the photographs, and Christmas and New Year's cards, which so many of our loving friends have sent; especially for the CHRISTMAS PUDDING which a little girl has herself made and sent us. It was very nice, dear Lillie. If our own kind wishes could be turned into canary birds, our friends would find feathered songsters perched on their shoulders to-morrow morning carolling a pleasant New Year's Song on behalf of the Editor.

[INCLINATION AND DUTY.]

## AUNT MILLICENT'S CHARGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SOLDIER HAROLD," &c.

### CHAPTER I.—AGATHA'S GRIEVANCES.

IT was Sunday afternoon in the middle of summer.

The sunshine lay hot and drowsy upon everything, even there, so close to the sea; no sound without save the humming of the bees in the garden, and the soft splash, splash, of the waves on the shore.

Within, on a sofa, drawn close to the shaded open window, lay a young girl; her pale face contrasting strangely with the dark, almost black hair that fell in thick tangled curls on the cool chintz pillow.

No quietness there, for she tossed about from side to side, and threw up her arms above her head. Now and then she opened the book in her hand, but it was only to close it again in a minute; and at last she threw it from her with an impatient fling, and buried her face in the cushion.

"Oh dear!" she exclaimed, with a great weary sigh, "how tiresome and dull it is here! nothing to see, and nothing to hear, and nothing to do; and I thought it was going to be so pleasant. I wish we had never come: I wish we had stayed at Willington; there was something worth living for there; and I should not have had this wretched pain in my back,—oh dear!"

And with another fling, Agatha turned round once more, to meet some kind eyes looking down gravely upon her.

"If you could but keep still, Miss Agatha, there might be some chance of your getting better; but you only make the pain worse by tossing about so. There, let me shake up your pillow; that's better and more comfortable."

"Oh dear!" sighed Agatha again, as she threw

her head down once more on the pillow that nurse had just arranged so nicely, "how long must I lie here, I wonder? shall I never be strong and well? If we had never come here I don't think my back would have been so bad as it is."

"You have no one but yourself to blame for the pain, Miss Agatha; so if I were you I would try to bear it patiently. If you had listened to what you were told, and not attempted to do more and carry heavier things than you had strength for, you would have been all right. But if you remember, both Miss Grey and I warned you repeatedly not to attempt those books; and yet you would do it."

"Papa said I might pack his books for him, and I did not know it would do me harm," cried Agatha, indignantly, for it seemed to her but poor consolation that her suffering might have been avoided if she had only been careful: the pain was no better to bear for that; rather worse, if anything.

"And I did so want to get everything done to come here," she went on, a little pitifully; "and now I don't care for it a bit! I wish papa had never come."

"Really, Miss Agatha," exclaimed nurse, "one would think you had not a bit of feeling. Why, I do believe it was solely and entirely on your account that master left Willington; and a great sacrifice it was for everybody, I am sure; and yet you grumble."

"For me!" and Agatha started up, "for me! how could it be for me?"

"Lie down again and be quiet, and don't worry yourself into a fever;" and nurse, with a firm yet gentle hand, laid the excited girl back on her sofa.

"You are very aggravating, nurse: I wish you would tell me what you mean."

"You must ask Miss Grey; she'll tell you."

"Aunt Millicent is not here; and where are Arnold and Johnnie? I do think they keep out of my way on purpose; they might come and try to amuse me; but I should not be a bit surprised if they have gone that pretty walk to Pencrink Wood, where I wanted so much to go, and they promised to wait for me; it is too bad!"

"I think you forget what day it is, Miss Agatha: your brothers are learning their lessons in the dining-room like good boys; do you learn yours, or lie still and go to sleep till Miss Grey comes back."

And with that, nurse went away, muttering, yet not so low but that Agatha could hear,—

"If folks haven't troubles they make them."

But the quietness that comes with sleep had not come to Agatha yet.

"Miss Agatha!" that was another of Agatha's grievances. If it were not for aunt Millicent she would be Miss Grey, now she was only Miss Agatha; and she could almost find it in her heart to wish that aunt Millicent did not live with them.

She lay picturing to herself how it would have been if she had been the head of her father's household these two years since her mother's death, and aunt Millicent had not been there at all; she could not quite imagine it, but she thought it would have been very nice.

Her day-dream was interrupted by a cool hand on her forehead, and a gentle voice saying,—

"Tired, Agatha?"

"I should think so, aunt Millicent! tired to death, lying here with nothing to do and nothing to see."

"Nothing to see! if you will only take the trouble to turn your head,—half an inch will do it—there, just so, you will see a sight your eyes have not often rested upon."

There was the beautiful great wide glorious sea, calm as a lake, with a white sail dotted here and there on the horizon; and to the extreme left the cliffs that formed the little bay. But Agatha could see no beauty there; she only said, with a half-disappointed sigh,—

"It is only the sea, aunt Millicent, and I don't care to look at anything out of a window."

There was hardly five years' difference between aunt and niece. Agatha was fifteen, and Millicent was scarcely turned twenty; indeed, she was often taken for her brother's daughter and Agatha's sister.

The faces too were alike; but the younger had a discontented, sore expression, while on the elder sat a refined, chastened air, as if, young though she was, she had known sorrow, and the sorrow had been turned to good account.

"I think you might have stayed to take care of me this afternoon, aunt Millicent," Agatha said after a pause, "instead of going to teach a lot of dirty village children."

"I had not a lot, and they were not dirty, Agatha."

"How many had you?"

"Six little girls."

"Only six! why, they were not worth the trouble of going."

"I thought I understood you just now that one was worth a great deal more trouble than that."

"Oh, me? but that is so different."

"Have you learnt your collect, Agatha?"

"No, I can't."

"But what will papa say if you have not it ready to repeat to him at tea-time?"

"I can't help it, aunt Millicent; I *can't* learn it, it is so difficult, and I don't think I quite believe it either," she added, in a low tone.

Miss Grey took the book from Agatha's hand, and read slowly and reverently the collect for the day:—

"O God, whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth; We humbly beseech Thee to put away from us all hurtful things, and give us the things which be profitable for us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Silence for a minute, and then she asked,—

"What is there so difficult in that, Agatha?"

"I don't know. Yes, I do, aunt Millicent. It says that God orders all things; and yet—and yet—I am sure He lets the hurtful things come sometimes; or else why am I not strong like other people? It puzzles me often and often: that cannot be anything but hurtful to me, aunt Millicent."

Miss Grey did not answer, but there was a slight smile on her face which Agatha saw, and it irritated her.

"Auntie, I know you have something to say, please say it out at once."

"When Dr. Mason gave you that lotion for your back which made it smart so much, do you think he ordered it only to cause you more pain, Agatha?"

"No, of course not, auntie; he meant it to cure the pain, and nurse said I bore it very well; but I knew it was to do me good, so that made all the difference."

"And do you think that our Father in heaven is less kind to us than our friends on earth? Oh no! be quite sure that He loves you, Agatha; He knows what is good for you far better than you can; and the very thing which you think is hurtful may be just the one most profitable; and sometimes I think that the grace of patience is one of the gifts you need from the Giver of all; is it not so, darling?"

Agatha lay still musing for a minute or two, and then she exclaimed in a somewhat injured tone,—

"I am sure it is very hard to be patient when I cannot go about like other people, but have to lie here with nothing to do, just because I happened to strain my back with those stupid old books. It is very hard indeed, I consider it."

"Hard, but not impossible, dear, when we remember who it is that has promised to help us. But I trust, please God, that you will be stronger now; these sea breezes will be the very thing for you, Agatha."

"Oh, aunt Millicent, that reminds me I wanted to ask you something;" and in her eagerness Agatha raised herself into a sitting posture; "nurse said papa came here entirely on my account; is that true, aunt Millicent?"

"Partly, dear. The sea air and sea bathing were strongly recommended for you, as the best means of making you well and strong like other people. But there were other reasons——"

But Agatha broke in impetuously,—

"Then I wish he hadn't! I shall hate the place; it will do me more harm than good, I am sure; and I shall never be happy here. I shall tell papa so."

"Oh, hush, Agatha! why, you were the very one who was the most eager to come. Have you forgotten how sorry you were when we were obliged to stay another week at Willington?"

"Ah, but I did not know what kind of a place this was then; and I wish we had never come."

"Oh, Agatha, do be patient! wait a little until we get settled, and then you will feel very different."

"No, auntie, I never shall. This will never be home to me."

Aunt Millicent's only answer was a half-unconscious sigh. Perhaps she had more reason to regret the change than Agatha had; for she had left one of her dearest friends behind at Willington; one to whom she could go in any difficulty, and be always sure of meeting with ready sympathy and help.

## Chapter II.—New Friends.

Nurse had told Agatha that her two brothers were in the dining-room quietly learning their collect, as she ought to have been doing; but if she had looked into the room on leaving Agatha, she would have found it empty.

The early Sunday dinner had been over some time, and silence had lasted perhaps ten minutes after the two boys had been left to themselves; and then Johnnie had stretched himself with a yawn.

"I know my collect. I wonder if we might go into the garden, Arnold? Do you think auntie would mind? it is so hot here."

"Go if you like," answered his brother. "I'll come too; there will be plenty of time to finish learning this before tea."

"I think I would finish it first," said Johnnie.

But his mild suggestion was not listened to. Arnold, with the superior air of an elder brother, assured him he knew nothing about it: it would be all right.

The back of the house was cool and shady, and the two boys walked up and down the gravel walk. Arnold's arm was round Johnnie's shoulder, and they were talking so eagerly that they did not notice two faces that were peeping at them over the garden wall.

At last a stone falling at their feet aroused their attention, and Johnnie gave such a great start of surprise, that he caught his foot against the box edging and tumbled backward over on to the flower border. The faces had by this time developed into two boys about their own age or a little older, sitting on the top of the wall, somewhat amused at the fright they had given those below.

Before Johnnie had recovered himself the strangers had sprung down from their elevated situation and joined them in the garden.

"We must introduce urselves, I suppose," they said. "I am Basil Gascoigne, and this is Ernest; and we live at Rothwell Hall, he house that you can see through the trees yonder, only a step from here."

"Yes," put in Ernest, "we saw you at church this morning, and Basil was so anxious to make your acquaintance, that he could not wait till to-morrow, but must needs come to-day, and I came with him to say, 'Welcome to Rothwell!'"

"Where was the use of waiting?" said Basil,

impatiently; "I mean us to be friends. I can see in Grey's eye—or the grey eye of Master Grey, if you like that better—something which draws me towards him, and which says, 'That's the friend for me.'"

"Don't be a goose, Basil," was Ernest's not very complimentary remark; while little Johnnie looked from one to the other, as if he could not very well make out what they meant.

Arnold made some kindly speech, as in duty bound, and the acquaintanceship, or friendship, as Basil called it, was begun.

"Papa told us that he believes you are to go to the same school at Low Marston that we do," Basil went on; "won't that be jolly? we have some first-rate fellows there."

"Indeed!" was all the answer Arnold made; but Johnnie exclaimed, regardless of the frown that his brother gave him, "We don't know anything about it; papa never tells us anything. But I am sure I hope we shan't. I should not like it a bit."

"I don't suppose you will be consulted, youngster," said Basil, giving poor Johnnie's ear a great pinch, which made him pull a wry face, and nearly made him cry; whereupon Ernest burst into a laugh, and Arnold impatiently told him not to be so silly.

"I believe papa is going to teach us himself," Arnold said, with an air of dignity; and Johnnie wondered how he knew.

"It is very stupid and dull here," said Basil; "why can't we go outside? it would be pleasant and cool in Pencrink Wood, and it is not above two miles away: let us go."

"Oh, but it is Sunday," said Johnnie.

"Where's the harm if it is? we are only going for a quiet walk; come along, Arnold."

Arnold hesitated, and Johnnie pulled him back from the gate which Basil had already swung open. The younger boy did not like their new acquaintances at all.

"Oh, don't go, Arnold; I am sure we oughtn't to; and you have your collect to learn yet, you know."

"There's plenty of time for that," said Arnold, moving on, for he saw a rather scornful smile on Basil's face as he leaned against the gate.

"Why, there are two hours to tea-time yet," said Ernest, "we shall be back again long before that; and it is such a pleasant walk. Come, Arnold: never mind the little fellow; we can dispense with his company, I am sure, if he is going to make himself disagreeable."

"Johnnie won't make himself disagreeable," said Arnold, who had his own reasons for not wishing his brother to remain behind.

"Do let me ask auntie first," urged Johnnie; "I don't think either she or papa will like it, Arnold; and you know we promised Agatha we would wait till she could go to the wood with us."

"We can go again when she is ready."

*All this time Basil had not said* a word. He stood in the same position, leaning against the gate, with that same scornful smile on his face, quietly waiting till the discussion should end, as he knew it would end, in Arnold going. He was not so sure of Johnnie; but his power over Arnold he knew at a glance.

"There seems to be a great deal to do about nothing," he said at last. "I merely proposed a pleasant walk. I should hardly have thought it necessary that leave should be asked; *we* are accustomed to do as we please in such matters;" with a conscious stress on the "we."

"Of course!" said Arnold, hastily; "it is only Johnnie's nonsense. I'm ready; come along."

Mr. Grey had come in from the study; Agatha had been moved into the easy chair in the window; the two little ones from the nursery, Hugh and Eva, who had always tea downstairs on Sundays as a great treat, had taken their places, aunt Millicent was pouring out the tea, and Mr. Grey was just inquiring for the two boys, when they rushed in hot and flushed, with rough hair and not over-clean hands, and sat down at the table.

Had it been any other day, Millicent would have sent them to make themselves tidy, but as it was Sunday she was silent.

"Where have you been, boys?" Mr. Grey inquired.

Arnold gave Johnnie a hint with his foot under the table to be quiet, and let him answer; and Johnnie obeyed, though he turned very red and tried to hide his face in his teacup.

Mr. Grey repeated the question.

"In the garden, papa; the sun shone in so hot here, Johnnie did not like it.'

"You should have come in sooner," answered their father, not noticing anything amiss.

Aunt Millicent was more observing, but she said nothing; she knew her brother had plenty to think about just then, and she did not want him to be troubled; besides, she hoped the boys had not been in mischief.

The collect came on but badly that evening. It was always Mr. Grey's custom to hear his three elder children repeat it just after tea, and generally it was said; for they all knew that papa was more grieved when the Sunday lessons were imperfect than any of the week-day ones; but to-day Johnnie's was the only one that was even passable: Arnold could not say a word, and Agatha stuck fast in the middle, and could get no further; for though Johnnie had learnt it perfectly at the beginning of the afternoon, the walk and talk had almost put it out of his head.

Mr. Grey closed the book very gravely, and laid it on the table.

"We will take this one again next Sunday, along with the next," he said; "and I hope you will all try to give it a little more attention. I trust this is not a specimen of what all the Sundays at Rothwell are to be like; eh, Agatha?"

"Papa, I could not learn it," answered Agatha in a low tone, looking down.

"Well, I will excuse you this time, but do not let it happen again. Study it through the week, and we will talk about it next Sunday."

That night, when aunt Millicent went upstairs to bed, she thought she heard a sound of sobbing as she passed the door of the boys' room, so she went in. Arnold was sleeping soundly; the sound did not come from him, but from the other side of the room, where Johnnie's head was buried in his pillow; and the words, "I wish I hadn't, oh! I wish I hadn't," came half smothered from it.

Millicent laid her hand upon his head.

"Johnnie darling, what is the matter?"

Johnnie started up, and throwing his arms round his aunt, drew her down to him.

"Oh, auntie, I am glad you have come!" he exclaimed, with a sigh of relief.

"What is it, dear?"

"I have been wanting to tell you all the evening, but I could not; it is about this afternoon. Auntie, Arnold and I went a walk with some boys, Basil and Ernest—I don't remember their other names,—instead of learning our lessons; and we only got back just at tea-time."

"That was not right, Johnnie; I think you would know that."

"Yes, I did, auntie; I knew it all the time. I did not want to go, but they made me; and I did not enjoy it a bit. But Arnold said I was not to say anything, so I didn't; and please don't let him know that I have told you, or he will be vexed."

"This is God's day, you know, dear, the one day in seven that He claims; and we are not to spend its sacred hours in our own pleasure, but in learning how we may best please and serve our great Father in heaven. I wonder how much you were thinking about Him in your walk, little Johnnie? All the trees, and the pretty flowers, and the pleasant green fields, and the bright sparkling sea, are all given us for our use and our pleasure; but if we use them and enjoy them without thinking of and thanking the good Giver, don't you think it must grieve Him?"

"I never thought of God at all, auntie."

"No; if you had remembered Him you would not have gone; you would have chosen some other day, not His day for pleasure, Johnnie. But you must try and learn to say no, when you know you ought to do. Perhaps if you had been firm this afternoon none of the others would have gone; and you knew it was wrong if they did not."

"Arnold did. And auntie, he very nearly told a story at tea-time when papa asked him: we had been in the garden, but we had been most of the time somewhere else."

"I am not talking to Arnold now; I am talking to you, Johnnie; and I want you to see that what others did was no reason why you should do wrong. But we must not talk any more to-night; it is quite time you were asleep. Good night, dear, and don't distress yourself any more."

"Good night, auntie; I am very glad I have told you."

"So am I. Be sure you always tell me everything, Johnnie."

Millicent retired to her own room. She was very sorry for what Johnnie had told her; and she rather doubted in her own mind whether she ought to have left her own little flock that afternoon. Agatha had grown fretful and impatient, and the boys had been clearly doing what they ought not. But those poor neglected little ones that she had been teaching—perhaps a word of hers might have lodged in some mind and heart to bring forth fruit; and if so, how could she regret it?

Her little nephews must sooner or later have made the acquaintance of the Gascoigne boys; though Millicent doubted exceedingly from the proceedings of that afternoon whether the companionship would be a good one.

How she longed for the advice and help of her kind friend Mr. Graham, whom she had left behind in Willington! for here was a responsible post. But Millicent had an unfailing Friend always at hand, One who has promised to guide those who trust in Him; and to that almighty Helper she took her trials and difficulties now.

Mr. Grey and his five children had come to Rothwell but two days before. Their home hitherto had been in the heart of a great bustling town, and the children had looked forward most eagerly to the change; but the little seaside village, when they reached it, was not nearly so attractive as they expected.

The vicarage was a new red house, and everything about it bare and bald. There had been no clergyman living at Rothwell before. Mr. Gascoigne had but recently come into the property; and one of his first acts had been to build the church and the vicarage. Mr. Grey, almost overworked in his large town parish, was glad to accept the charge; partly for the sake of the poor neglected people, but chiefly, as nurse had told Agatha, on account of his young family, and especially for his delicate daughter; for the doctor gave him strong hopes that the healthy air of Rothwell, and the sea bathing, would quite restore her to health.

Mrs. Grey had been dead some two years; and Millicent, at the age of eighteen, had come to take charge of her young nephews and nieces. Mr. Grey was grave and quiet, and much engrossed in his ministerial work and in parish matters, so that much of the care of them devolved upon her; but she watched them with loving care.

The two boys, Arnold and Johnnie, thirteen and eleven, always listened to aunt Millicent's gentle suggestions, and were generally willing to be guided by her; and the little ones in the nursery, Hugh and Eva, of five and three, hardly knew her from their mother.

With Agatha had hitherto lain her greatest difficulty: she was so near her own age, and had

seemed rather to resent having her young aunt put over her; and Agatha was not strong, which she always seemed to consider was to be an excuse for a great many wrong things. She had once, when quite a young child, had a bad fall; and whenever she was over-tired, or had exerted herself too much, her back was sure to become weak and painful; she had grown quickly too, and was altogether quite delicate enough to need constant care and consideration; and I think she presumed upon it more than she ought to have done.

## A TRUE HERO.

(*From the French.*)

THE other day I went to call at the home of my little friend Paul when his parents were both out. As I am very fond of the little man, and was tired that morning, I resolved to sit and chat with him for a while, in the chance of his mother's returning home soon, and, as usual, my young friend insisted on my telling him a story. It must be about a hero, he said, and some hero still alive, "not just an old fellow out of history."

My young friend Paul is a pretty, bright-looking little fellow, with blue eyes and black curly hair. His father is an officer, and the idea of soldiers and soldiering is one always present to his mind. On the day I speak of I found him when I called, pretending to be a soldier, in his little red cricketing jersey and white trousers, his mamma's fur boa thrown over his shoulders looked like the fur lacing of some of the foreign hussar regiments. Some one had given him an old cocked opera hat, into which he had stuck a white feather. Instead of a sword he had in his hand an ivory paper-knife, just taken out of a new book of which the leaves were not all cut, and with a burnt cork he had given himself a moustache that would not have disgraced a veteran trooper.

As I entered, he had just mounted upon an arm-chair, and was making believe to be Napoleon Bonaparte at Moscow, having perched himself upon an arm-chair which he pretended was the great Russian fortress of the Kremlin. As soon as I came in, without even waiting to say "How do you do?" he turned to me in a commanding voice, and asked me to surrender to him the keys.

I took up a waiter that happened to be lying near, and placing a pair of scissors upon it, handed it with great solemnity to the little emperor, who received it with stern dignity.

"I mean to be a real soldier when I'm grown up," he said with a determined air. "But I'm tired of play now, please tell me a story, and let it be about some very, very brave man, some hero; only let it be some one that's alive now, not an old fellow out of history."

"Paul, my boy, you want it to be about some brave hero, and I suppose by a hero you mean some soldier who has fought very bravely. But don't you know that life was given us for some better use than fighting battles and taking other people's lives."

Paul looked thoughtfully up at me when I said this, but made me no reply, and I went on—

"Perhaps you would be surprised if you heard me say that the hero whose story I am going to tell you was quite a poor man. Over there in the corner of the street you may see a man very meanly dressed, ready to do any job for which a passenger may offer him a penny. He is a messenger, a commissionaire, to use the proper word, and he is also a shoe black, if you call him and put your foot upon his box, he will clean your boots as quickly and thoroughly as your papa's man-servant would do, and he would go from one end of the town to another, through the rain and mud to take a message or run an errand for you for a few coppers. Now suppose I told you of a man, just in the same condition of life as that poor commissionaire, who, without ever stepping out of his lonly rank, was yet as honourable, as honoured, as covered with glory, as the bravest general in our army, shouldn't you be very much astonished?"

"I think I should be just," replied the child.

"And," continued I, "suppose I were to tell you that your father would be proud of having such a man for his friend, that your father, the brave general, would be glad to shake him by the hand, and seeing in the man's button-hole the same cross of honour he himself had worn in so many battles, would speak to the poor man as my comrade."

"I should think you were telling me a make-up story like a fairy tale," said little Paul, with a glow of astonishment over his features.

"No, I'm only telling you about things that have really happened, and that quite lately. Learn, my little boy, now you're young, that everybody that chooses can be really noble, and that there are heroes who have never seen a field of battle.

"Perhaps you have heard of Rouen, the chief town of Normandy. It is famous for its beautiful cathedral, its many fine old buildings, and its manufactories. In Rouen there lives a poor commissionaire, perhaps even poorer than the man you see out there in the street. His name is Louis Brune, and from the time he was a very young boy his great wish has always been to be of use and help to those who are in danger. Particularly has he felt a wish to save persons from being drowned. At the age when *your* head is full of battles and sieges, slaughtered men and heaps of slain, his dream was always of saving from the angry waves the lives of children like himself, of husbands and of fathers. It was not long before his wish to save lives changed from an idea to a reality. The first drowning person whom he rescued was a young lad of his own age, whom he

snatched from the river at the risk of his own life, and whom he had the great happiness of bringing back to his distracted mother. This was but the beginning of a long series of kind and generous actions of the same sort. As soon as he was out of his apprenticeship he gave up all his spare time to the work. Directly he had worked for a sufficient number of hours to enable him to get daily bread, he would make his way down to the riverside, and there he would stand patiently, hour after hour, looking at the waves, and ready at any moment to plunge into the stream if any one fell in, and to warn imprudent bathers that they were in danger.

"And how many persons, my little general, do you tink this good and brave man has saved in the course of his life? No less than twenty. You, my little friend, have, I know, been taught by your good mother to read your Bible, and you know from the New Testament who it was who came directly to save from drowning those who cried to Him, 'Lord, save us; we perish.' And Louis Brune has followed the dear Saviour's example in always seeming to hear a cry for help in every one in danger from the waters. He has saved children, he has saved old men, he has saved people who have got into danger through no imprudence or fault of their own, and careless ones, again, who had forgotten that the broad river Seine at Rouen was not the narrow stream one sees it at Paris. He has saved professional sailors, he has saved townspeople out for a row or a sail, and not knowing how to manage their vessel. On one occasion a sailing-boat came down from Paris, full of young clerks out for a holiday. The wind rose, the boat turned (*capsized*, as sailors say), one of the young men fell into the water. He was drowned, alas!—no one could save him, for Louis Brune was not there!

"Gradually the name of Louis Brune got to be widely known, and people who came from a distance to see the beautiful old city of Rouen, asked not only where the cathedral was, and whereabouts stood the different public buildings, but where the rescuer, as this good man had got to be called, had his dwelling.

"Honours from the noble and the great came to him in abundance, too. The King of France of that time, sent Brune a medal for every man he saved from drowning, and when he reached the twentieth a greater honour still was given him, the Cross of the Legion of Honour. But still these rewards, though gratifying to Louis Brune, as coming from his king, were nothing to the joy he got from the thought that he was doing his duty, that he was pleasing God and saving men's lives. For this cause he was ready to get out of bed at any time of the night, if he heard the wind unusually loud, or that strange *sus, sus*, from the river, the peculiar sound which shows that its waves are beginning to rise.

"In spite of all his honours, Louis Brune was still a very poor man, having to work hard enough for his wife, his child, and his mother, who was still living."

"One winter, not many years ago (you were yourself alive then, though in the comfortable house of your parents you did not know what a bitterly cold winter it was), Louis Brune was sitting by the dying bed of his old mother. She was lying on a poor pallet bed, without curtains, and her room was only warmed by a fire of chips and shavings. But the love of her good son soothed and comforted her in her sufferings as much as if she had been a great lady and he a nobleman. But all the while the wind was whistling dolefully out of doors, and great flakes of snow were falling against the window panes. Suddenly there was a loud and terrible cry—as of some one in distress. Louis Brune's name was called eagerly. Some one was drowning, no doubt. But what could he do? Here was his mother passing away—how could he leave her? If he went, even for a few minutes, he might not find her alive when he came back.

"Only a few moments' reflection told Louis Brune what it was his duty to do. His good wife and daughter could attend on his mother to the last, while there was no one, perhaps, but himself in all Rouen, who had strength, courage, and skill enough to rescue the poor man and woman, whoever it was, who in a few moments might be in a watery grave. So, tearing himself unwillingly from his dear mother's bedside, after asking for her 'blessing,' he ran down to the river, and found that they were two persons, a man and a woman, who had fallen in. The frost had lasted so long that the river had frozen over. A sort of fair was being held on the ice, some of the people were skating, others riding about on little sledges, and others eating and drinking, and amusing themselves in all sorts of different ways, when suddenly the ice began to give way, and there was a loud cry that a man and woman had fallen into the water. But for the prompt help of Louis Brune, the two unfortunate people must have perished, and hard was the struggle *he* had to save them. After having safely brought the woman to land, he plunged in again to save the poor man, but was so exhausted himself with cold and fatigue, that for some minutes *he* was believed to be dead. He recovered, however, but when he reached home his good mother was no more.

"But the people of Rouen began to think they had not done half enough for the good rescuer. Accordingly, they built him a small house on a bridge over the river, where he might always be in readiness whenever any poor drowning creature called out to him for help.

"The citizens of Rouen also adopted his daughter, and provided for her for her life.

"Well, Paul, isn't my hero as brave a one as any of your favourite soldiers?"

"Yes," replied the little fellow; "whenever papa gives me the pony he promised, his name shall be Louis Brune."

Four or five years after my telling my little friend the brave deeds of Brune, there was, in the month of December, a terrible tempest. One could hear, even at Rouen, which is so many miles inland, the roaring of the sea. Louis Brune listened, thought he heard the groan of a drowning person, got up, went out, plunged into the river, and was found next morning *dead*, close to the house the city had built for its "rescuer." The heroic man had died a martyr to his wish to save his fellow-men.

JESSIE YOUNG.

## THE CONSTANT FRIEND.

"FEAR thou not; for I am with thee:"
Sweet it is at early dawn,
When this kind and soothing message
To our waiting hearts is borne;
For whatever lies before us,—
Sudden storms or noontide heat,—
Since our heavenly Guide is with us,
Bravely we the future meet.

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee:"
When night gathers o'er the sky
Calm we feel amidst its shadows,
Knowing that our Friend is nigh;
He can shield from every danger,
Bend His ear to each appeal,
And in hours of deepest darkness
Star-like promises reveal.

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee:"
Others may have left our side;
But, alike through cloud and sunshine,
With us will the Lord abide;
Loved ones in their bloom have faded,
Early friends have passed away;
But His name is Everlasting,
And His arm is still our stay.

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee,"—
With thee through the darksome vale,
Where My staff shall be thy comfort,
And My promise shall not fail.
Precious Saviour! Thy sweet presence
Bids each dark foreboding flee;
I will trust, and fear no evil,
For Thy love encircleth me.

NETTA LEIGH.

## CRITICAL NOTICES.

THE BRANDENS. By Eliza Hutchinson.—A good story, pleasantly told: showing how many opportunities occur in our daily life for the exercise of a loving self-denial in promoting the welfare of those around us. (*S. W. Partridge & Co.*)

THE YOUNG BOTANIST.—The author of "Flowers and their Teachings," writes, in this prettily illustrated book, both wisely and attractively, and tells us not only much about their nature but links with it stories and associations which keep her lectures from ever becoming dry. (*Religious Tract Society.*)

HYBRASIL. By I. F. Galway.—Some of our friends living on the northern and western coasts *of Ireland believe* they can see in fine spring weather the Islands of Hybrasil, which from ancient times have been celebrated as the paradise of happy spirits. This legend has served as the foundation of a pretty poem, which with other verses Miss Galway gives us in a small volume. (*Hamilton & Co.*)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES. By Alexander Murray.—A useful guide to the persons, places and events mentioned in the Old Testament. It contains 2,220 references, and the price is only 1s. 6d. (*Virtue & Co.*)

THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY. By Florence C. Armstrong.—A little book containing nine poetic pieces, with pretty illustrations. Nice in sentiment and easy in versification. (*W. Wells Gardner.*)

MARY TRELAWNY. By Christian Redford.—Showing how an energetic little village girl paid her aunt's debt of £20. A very well told story. (*Nisbet & Co.*)

ACTIVE SERVICE.—A deeply interesting narrative of Miss Sarah Robinson's Christian work among our soldiers. (*Hatchards.*)

MEMORIALS OF LILIAN ANN DELF.—A sweet and touching sketch of a dear child's life, who is now safe in the arms of Jesus. She was so fond of our Magazine that her mother used constantly to call her "Sunshine." Some day we should like to tell you more about her. (*S. W. Partridge.*)

LEAVES. By Alessie Bond.—Some of these poems have appeared in "Golden Hours" and "Sunshine"; all are marked by pathetic sentiment and poetic conception. (*W. Mackintosh.*)

## EDITORIAL NOTICES.

DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,—May your shadows never grow less. We wish it true both of years and character.

We hope you are active canvassers as well as loving readers. Do you not pity the boys and girls who live in such a dark and dreary world that they have not seen "Sunshine"? If you do, let your pity take a practical shape. We will give you as many rays of Sunshine as you can contrive to scatter. If you want to shine, send us a line. The Volume for 1875, price 1s. 6d. and 2s. 6d., may be ordered of any bookseller.

GOLDEN HOURS.—A beautiful sixpenny monthly magazine. Two delightful stories begin in the January number, "Deborah's Whim," by Miss M. E. Shipley, and "Money or Life," by G. Holden Pike, besides many other interesting articles. Quite a library in itself. Cannot you manage to save or earn sixpence a month to buy it? The Annual Volume is 7s. 6d.

LETTERS AND BOOKS FOR REVIEW should be addressed to the Rev. Dr. Whittemore, 24, Paternoster Row, London.

## CHILDREN'S QUARTERLY SERVICE.

AT St. Katherine Cree Church, Leadenhall Street, on Sunday Afternoon, January 2, at half-past Three o'clock. Sermon by the Editor, who hopes his "Sunshine" friends will stay after the service to speak to him.

# SUNSHINE.

EDITED BY W. M. WHITTEMORE, D.D., RECTOR OF ST. KATHERINE CREE, LONDON.

No. 170. FEBRUARY, 1876. [ONE PENNY.

[THE BIRTHDAY CAKE.]

## LITTLE ALINE.

A STORY OF GIPSY LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PET'S DIFFICULTIES."

### CHAPTER IV. — IMPROVING THE ACQUAINTANCE.

"WERE you very tired, that you fell asleep?" said Ethel as she patted Rover, and made him sit down beside her.

"Yes, we had *come ever so far* afore breakfast this morning," answered the little gipsy girl, "and I had nothing to do afterwards, so I set off to have a look round the place."

"And you walked too far, and tired yourself?"

"A little; but I couldn't tell exactly where I'd got to, and while I stopped to puzzle it out I somehow dropped off asleep."

"You had lost your way, then."

"Lost my way? no, indeed!" said the girl, with a touch of contempt in her voice; "I'm not quite such a goose as that! Trust me for findin

my way anywhere so long as I've got two legs to carry me."

"But I thought you said you did not know where you were?" persisted Ethel.

"No more I didn't; but you ain't lost just because you can't recollect whether the road to the right, or t'other one, leads home'ards."

"You have been in this neighbourhood before, then?" said Ethel.

"In this *what*?" she asked.

"In this part,—this place, I mean."

"I should think I have!" she answered, with energy. "Knows most of it as well as I knows myself; better too, for it isn't often that *I* stares at a looking-glass. Is that your dog?" she added, abruptly.

"No, he belongs to Mr. Atherton, at Dingley Farm, up on the hill."

"Ah, he's real good; and so is the missis. She has often give me a lump of pudding, or a hunch of bread and cheese; and if ever *he* met me in the lane, he always used to say, 'Well, little one, and how are you to-day?' I like 'em both."

"So do I," said Ethel; "I am spending the day there."

"You don't live there? I thought may be you did as you'd got the dog with you."

"No, I live at Grange Hall; my papa is Mr. Raymond," said Ethel, rather loftily. She glanced complacently at her silk frock and Leghorn hat, and wondered that even a gipsy girl had not sufficient discernment to see in a moment that she could not possibly be any relative of Margaret or her husband.

At the mention of Mr. Raymond's name, the child looked curiously at Ethel, and said very significantly, "Oh!"

"Have you seen my papa?" said Ethel, curious in her turn.

"No, not as I remembers; it's some time since I was here afore."

"Do you know anything about him?"

"Not much; I believe I've heard our folks speak of him sometimes."

"And do they like him?"

"How can I tell? There's no reason they shouldn't like him, is there?"

"Of course not; I only thought you looked very grave when I said who he was."

"Well, I didn't see anything to laugh at," she answered, quietly; "it's a nice name enough. What is your other name?"

"My Christian name is Ethel; what is yours?"

"Aline, Aline Cooper; but why do you call it your *Christian* name?"

"Because it was given to me when I was baptized at church, when I was a baby. Did not you get your name in that way?"

The child laughed a merry little laugh.

"Goodness knows! I am sure *I* don't. As if *I could have* the least idea of what happened to *me as a baby!*"

"Nobody recollects that," said Ethel, with some dignity. "But your mother might have told you about it."

"I have not got any mother."

"Have you a father?"

"No; he died soon after I was born."

"And your mother?"

"I was three years old, between three and four, perhaps, when mother left me. She did not seem to be ill of anything, they tells me, but she just pined and wasted away, day after day, like a white flower that droops on its stalk, and nothing can't save it."

"Can you remember her at all?"

"I think I can; yes, I'm sure I can. She had a sweet pale face, not like our people's, more like yourn's; but her eyes were as bright as two stars, and her long curls were as soft as silk. She was beautiful; as beautiful as a picture, my mother was!"

"What a pity she died!" said Ethel. "But you cannot have missed her much, you were such a little thing."

"But I have missed her; I *do* miss her: don't you suppose that I want a mother as much as you do?" she said passionately. "Who cares for me when I am in trouble, or comforts me as she would have done? If I am sick or well, merry or sad, what does it signify to anybody? Oh, mother, mother, how could you go away and leave me!"

Ethel was touched by this sudden outburst of grief. She laid her hand gently on the child's shoulder, and said, in that pitying, half-motherly way which little girls sometimes assume towards each other,—

"Poor Aline! I am so sorry for you! It must be very sad not to have a mother."

The gipsy child was evidently surprised and pleased at the sympathy she met with. The words alone would have been consoling, but the kind look and the friendly pressure in addition quite won the heart of the little wanderer. She turned gratefully towards Ethel, saying in the quick way natural to her,—

"I like you. I thought at first that perhaps you hated us."

"Hate you! why should I?" exclaimed Ethel, in astonishment.

"Oh, I don't know; some folks do," she answered, evasively; "they drive us off like a pack of sheep if we comes too near 'em. However, we're not going to bide here long this time."

"Whither are you going?"

"To Cloverly; there's a fair there next week, and we shall have a great deal to do."

"Can *you* do anything?"

"Oh yes, I can sing first-rate now; I've got a splendid voice, Tim says."

"Who is Tim?"

"He is my aunt's husband, but I don't like him, so I won't call him uncle; but he's been mighty civil to me lately."

"Why is that?"

"Oh, because my singing is all the 'go' now, and it brings him lots of coppers."

"Is your aunt kind to you?"

"Sometimes she is, and sometimes she isn't, but she gives me plenty of grub (food), and I does pretty much as I likes in general."

"Shall you come back here when you leave Cloverly?"

"No; we shall be off then to the hop-picking. But I must be moving; the sun's a-beginning to go down."

Ethel drew out of her pocket two large pears, and some sweet biscuits, which Margaret had given her for dessert. She put them into the gipsy child's hand, and said, "You can eat these as you run along home. Where is your home?"

"Near the Green Hollow."

"Then after you've crossed the field you must take the turning to the left."

"Thank you; oh yes, I remembers it now."

"Shall I see you again?" asked Ethel, as the girl was walking slowly away.

"Perhaps, and perhaps not," she answered, with a comical twist of her shoulder. "I say, look here! have you been picking them flowers?"

"Yes," said Ethel.

"Like 'em, do you?"

"Why, yes, or else I should not be at the trouble of gathering them," said Ethel, smiling.

"I can find you heaps, if you care to have them, a great deal prettier than those," she said, eagerly, "real beauties, some of 'em, and uncommon too."

"I shall be very glad of them, but I am going home this evening."

"Won't you be at the farm again?"

"Not at present. Stay," continued Ethel, "I had forgotten that I shall be up the hill the day after to-morrow; could you come then?"

"What time will you be there?"

"About eleven in the morning; will that do?"

The girl nodded her head. "Yes; I'll come without fail; Aline always keeps her word."

"Good-bye, Aline."

"Good-bye, Miss Ethel." It was her first and only use of the word "miss;" but it showed that she knew how to speak properly, and also—as is the case with so many of us—that her knowledge was in advance of her practice. She was an independent, self-willed little thing, and had never learnt that sentence in the Catechism which teaches children to order themselves reverently towards their betters. Probably if you had told her of it, she would indignantly have denied that Ethel was in any way superior to herself.

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## Chapter V.—How Papa liked the Cake.

Ethel walked back to the farm as soon as she had parted from *Aline*; and found Margaret setting the table for early tea. Philip had returned, and they were both looking very grave and busy over a letter which had just arrived. The letter was from a Mrs. Simpson in London, in whose house a widowed half-sister of Mr. Atherton lived. This sister was several years older than Philip, and had been since the death of her husband much reduced in circumstances. But Philip was a very kind brother to her, and he always allowed her a small weekly sum towards the support of herself and child; besides often sending her a hamper, well filled with good things from the farm. The widow's name was Mrs. Foster, and the letter which came was to say that she was very ill, and not expected to recover. She had been ailing for a long time, but had latterly seemed better than usual, when a severe cold seized her lungs; and she was now so weak that the doctor did not think she could rally.

"I must set off by the first train in the morning," said Philip to his wife.

"Yes, it will be better to go at once, and then you will see for yourself how she is."

"She has got through so many illnesses, that I should not be at all surprised to-morrow if I find that she is mending. A creaking door hangs long upon its hinges."

"I know that, Philip; still, it is impossible to tell what might happen; and either way, your sister will be pleased to see you. I will pack up some eggs and butter for you to take with you."

Margaret and her husband were so much occupied in talking about Mrs. Foster's illness, that Ethel, when she first went in, had no opportunity of speaking about the little gipsy girl, and she forgot it afterwards. But she did *not* forget to carry her cake home, nor to put it carefully away in a cupboard until the next day.

The next day was her papa's birthday, and Ethel would have liked to go into his room as soon as she was dressed, eager to give him her present; but Mrs. Raymond had passed a very restless night, and slept until long past breakfast-time. Of course he could not be disturbed; and Ethel had to wait patiently till he awoke.

Directly her mother gave her leave she rang for a knife, and took her cake, which was prettily ornamented with pink paper, up to her papa.

"Many happy returns of the day, dear papa; and I have brought you a cake, my own cake, papa; you must taste it and see whether it is good."

With an air of great self-importance she began to cut the cake, and was just in the act of handing a piece to him, when he said,—

"How could you think of bringing me a cake, Ethel? You know I never care for them."

"But papa, dear, I made it all myself! I made every bit of it, and on purpose for you."

She spoke so earnestly, and looked so disappointed, that Mr. Raymond could not help noticing it, and he said,—

"Well, well, dear, I will try and eat a bit of it to please you."

He broke off a tiny corner, and put it into his mouth.

Ethel watched him as eagerly as if she were dependent on him for a certificate of her abilities in that department.

"Is it nice, papa?"

"Very fair, my dear," he said, "considering who made it; but I do not think you need trouble yourself to learn cooking just yet."

"It is not a trouble, papa, it is such fun! I had to beat the eggs for a quarter of an hour first: how many eggs do you think I used for my cake, papa?"

"I am sure I do not know, child. Now run away to your play, for I am going to be very busy."

"Won't you have a piece more, papa?"

"No, thank you," he said, hastily.

"Perhaps if I leave it, papa, you could eat some presently?" she said, in a persuasive tone.

"No, no, my dear, take it with you and eat it yourself, you will like it more than I shall."

He pushed the plate from him, and the next minute was absorbed in his papers.

Ethel slowly took up the plate, looking mournfully at the small difference that was made in its size; and though she walked out of the room with her head very erect, as if it were a matter of perfect indifference whether her cake was liked or disliked, yet the tears rushed into her eyes as soon as she had closed the door behind her.

It may seem a trifling thing to some of my readers, but Ethel was really sadly disappointed by her papa's want of interest in her cake-making. She had thought so much of this her first attempt of the kind, that she had expected him to manifest some little sympathy respecting it. It was a great pity that Mr. Raymond appeared so indifferent to his child's small pleasures, for it tended to weaken on her part the affection between them.

Ethel's trouble was soon unfolded to her mother.

"Look, mamma! papa has only just tasted a morsel of my cake, and he does not want any more of it."

"That is too bad of him!" said Mrs. Raymond, smiling. "But papa is not fond of that sort of cake, dear; and perhaps he was not aware that it was of your making."

"Yes, he was, mamma, for I told him."

"Well, never mind, dear, he is not very well to-day, and his appetite is so bad, that I dare say he could not relish it; but if you will cut *me* a large slice, you shall see how quickly it will disappear."

Ethel's heart was lightened, and she and her mamma thoroughly enjoyed the cake together. Mrs. Raymond praised her little daughter's skill, and said that she had succeeded very well indeed.

Still, after all, there was the uneasy feeling left in the little girl's mind that her father concerned himself very little about her. And it is never well for a child that entertains such an opinion of either of its parents.

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## Chapter VI.—Another Visit to the Farm.

Ethel accompanied her mother to the farm on the following morning. It was a lovely day; the sun lighted up hill and valley, and peeped into many a cottage window; and the little birds flitted from bough to bough, too happy to keep still as they warbled their sweet songs to the passers by.

Ethel, walking by her mother's side, felt as gay as the birdies did, and seemed to have as little care in her heart; for a disappointment like that about her cake was generally forgotten after a night's rest. Besides, she was going to the farm, and it was always a pleasure to her to pay Margaret a visit.

But Mrs. Raymond appeared grave and almost sad. She answered her little girl when she spoke to her, and smiled sometimes at her remarks, but it was in an absent sort of way, as if her mind was elsewhere. At length Ethel noticed how serious she looked.

"Mamma, what are you thinking about?" she said, suddenly.

"Are you going to offer me a penny for my thoughts, Ethel?" said her mother, smiling.

"I have not got a penny, mamma; I am dreadfully poor to-day," said Ethel; "besides, I do not know that your thoughts would be worth as much as that," she added, laughing.

"As you have so poor an opinion of them, I shall keep them to myself," said her mother, in the same playful tone.

Ethel changed hers the next minute "Mamma dear, are you troubled about anything?" she asked, looking up earnestly into her mother's face.

"Yes, dear, I am, a little."

"Is it about papa?"

"Not exactly, Ethel."

"What then, mamma?"

Mrs. Raymond hesitated. "I will tell you when we are at home, dear; there is not time now, for we shall soon be at the farm."

Ethel was satisfied; she knew her mamma would fulfil her promise, and she could wait; but she went on rather more soberly the rest of the way, for she wondered what trouble it could possibly be that her mamma wished her to be acquainted with. Ethel was an imaginative child, and she at once began to conjecture the sort of news that awaited her.

"Perhaps papa has lost a good deal of money, and we shall become very poor, and shall have to live in a little cottage. What a comfort I shall be to mamma! I shall dust the ornaments in the drawing-room—in the parlour, I mean, for I suppose we should not have a drawing-room—and I

should train roses round the porch, and gather strawberries for mamma's breakfast, and read the newspaper to papa.

"Or perhaps it is something quite different," mused Ethel. "Perhaps the dressmaker has spoilt mamma's new silk, so that she cannot wear it; or else the parcel with it in has been lost on the railway, and papa is angry, and says she must not have more money to buy a new one.

"Or perhaps there was some bad news in that large letter in a blue envelope that came this morning. Papa looked very cross as he tossed it across the table to mamma. It might be from that cousin of mamma's that wasted his property and went off to Australia. Very likely he wants papa to help him."

Ethel's imaginings were cut short by their arrival at the farm. Margaret seemed pleased to see them, but Ethel was sure that she too looked graver than usual. It was not long before they learnt the cause of her gravity.

"You will be sorry to hear, ma'am, that my husband has lost his sister; she died yesterday morning."

"Before he reached town, then? Ethel told me that she was very ill."

"Yes, ma'am, they did not expect she would have gone off so rapidly; she passed away quietly in her sleep."

"Your husband would be sorry not to see her again."

"He felt it just at first, ma'am; but it is not very long since he was in London on business, and he called then, and had a nice chat with her.

"She had only one child, I believe?"

"Only one, a girl of thirteen," answered Margaret.

"What will she do?—go out to service?"

"No, she is not strong enough for that; she is slightly deformed, through some affection of the spine; it is so slight that it scarcely shows, but it makes her health very delicate."

"Has she any relations on her father's side?"

"Not one to be of any help to her; she will come here when the funeral is over."

"It is very kind of you to take charge of her."

"Oh, ma'am, Philip and I would not like it to be otherwise; we always meant her to have a home with us when her mother was taken."

"Has your husband returned?"

"Yes, he came from town last evening, and will be going again at the beginning of the week. Philip is down at the long barn," she added, turning to Ethel, "our dog Fanchon has got three puppies, and you are to choose one for yourself, Miss Ethel. Would you like to run across and look at them now?"

"May I, mamma?" asked Ethel, delighted at the prospect of a new little pet.

"Yes, dear, and you need not hurry back, for I want to have a long talk with Margaret."

Ethel ran gaily out of the room, and returned as quickly to say, "Oh, Margaret, if a little gipsy girl should come with some flowers for me, please——"

Margaret interrupted her: "A little girl has already been with some flowers for you, Miss Ethel, a large bunch of lovely wild flowers: they are in the kitchen; I put them into some water that they might not fade."

"When was she here?" asked Ethel.

"Between five and six this morning."

"So early as that! Why did she come so soon?"

"Because she was going away in an hour or two with her people. She was quite out of breath when she got up to the door, for she had run so quickly; but I made her stay and drink a cup of hot coffee, for Philip and I were just having our breakfast."

"You breakfast so early," said Mrs. Raymond, smiling.

"Poor little Aline! I am sorry I shall not see her again," exclaimed Ethel.

"She was sorry too; she bade me tell you so; and I was always to say that she should never forget how kind you were to her."

"I only *spoke* kindly to her," said Ethel. "She was asleep under a tree, and Rover frightened her, and I called him off; and then she saw the flowers I had gathered, and offered to get me some better ones."

Ethel went to the barn to find Philip, thinking as she crossed the meadow how truthful the little gipsy girl had been when she said, "Aline always keeps her word;" and wondering whether she should at any future time meet with her.

## THE BIRD'S SONG.

A LITTLE bird sat on my old house tree,
And this is the song that it sang to me:—

"The night is dark, and the day is dreary,
The way is long, and the heart grows weary;
But wait awhile, and the sun will shine,
And rest and gladness again be thine.

"Bear, bravely bear with the winter's cold,
For Spring will shortly her buds unfold;
And murmur not at the frost and snow,
For they nurture the little buds below.

"Press onwards! for though the road be long,
It leads to the land of light and song;
Sow precious grain in the world's wide field,
For autumn-time will the harvest yield.

"Thy daily cross such a burden lies,
It keeps thee down when thou fain wouldst rise;
But cast on God all thy grief and care,
And think of the 'crown' thou soon shalt wear.

"Courage, faint heart! for thy present pain
Works out thy future and endless gain,
Trust, like a child, in thy Father's love,
Till He calls thee home to thy rest above."

What was the name of that dear little bird?
Was it Patience or Hope? I have not yet heard,
So I leave *you* to settle which name it should be,
But its sweet little song was a comfort to me.

NETTA LEIGH.

# HOW WE FURNISHED OUR DOLL'S HOUSE.

## CHAPTER I.—WE MAKE A CHAIR.

I'M seven years old next birthday, and Willie is nine, for he is bigger than me, and Gerty is only just five, and quite a little thing, and papa doesn't call her "little woman" as he does me, but then of course I'm older.

And that's the reason why nurse says I ought to take care of Gerty and be kind to her, for we haven't got a mamma down here like other little girls; she went up to heaven that night when Gerty was brought to us, and I can't remember her, though Willie can.

I don't know how it is with little girls whose mamma isn't in heaven, but Gerty and I do get so tired and so cross sometimes, and that Willie teases us so, and melts our wax dolls before the fire, and won't let us touch his soldiers, or beat his drum, or blow his trumpet, or anything of the kind; and he breaks up our doll's houses and smashes our tea-things until we begin to cry, when nurse makes him give over. Of course I'm very fond of Willie, and Gerty says she is too, but he is so tiresome: nurse says boys always are tiresome, so I suppose Willie can't help it.

Yesterday we went to aunt Bessie's to tea, but it was raining hard, so we couldn't go into the garden, and we'd seen all the picture books before, and played with the puzzles that auntie keeps to amuse us, and we hadn't even our dolls or Willie's steam engine—there's no steam in it, though he will call it a steam engine—as we had at home, and Gerty and I were beginning to play with auntie's dog Floss, that always will growl at us, when auntie said,—

"Come here, children, I'm going to show you something new," and so we gathered round her to see what it was.

It wasn't much, after all, only some yellow peas that had swollen with being kept in water, and some long round thin sticks, which she seemed to be breaking into small pieces and sharpening the ends of.

"What is it, auntie?" I asked, while Gerty began to eat the peas, which was very wrong of her. Willie took hold of some of the long sticks to break them.

"Come and sit round the table, and I'll show you," said auntie; so of course we did so, and then auntie said,—

"I'm going to make a dolly's chair; you shall watch me, and then see if you can make one too."

So we did watch auntie, though we wanted to get hold of the peas and sticks before she had finished, and Gerty would get some in her mouth and eat them, though I tried hard to prevent her.

Auntie's chair was lovely, all made of peas and *sticks stuck in them, and I felt sure* I could make *one just like it, for it looked so easy.*

I began quite nicely; I had a pointed stick, and I stuck a pea on each end of it, and then I took another stick and stuck it into one of the two peas and made a corner. Auntie said something about a right angle, but I'm not quite sure that I understood her, and I know Gerty didn't, though Willie pretended that he did, but that's because he's got a tutor.

Well, then I put a pea on to the end of that stick, and took another stick, they were all the same length, and stuck that in the pea, and then I'd got another corner; so when I'd put a pea on the end of it, I took a stick and fastened each end into the two peas, and then I'd got a square. Or it should have been a square, only it wasn't, because it was all crooked, and wouldn't go straight; and I showed it to auntie, who took it in her hands, and she said I hadn't stuck all the points of the sticks in alike; but she bent it straight in a minute for me, and then I could go on.

Willie got his straighter than mine, but it wasn't quite right, and so I told him; but he said, "girls didn't know anything," and he wouldn't even let auntie touch it, but said he would do it all by himself. That's the worst of Willie, he's a nice boy, but he does think himself so clever.

Poor little Gerty was almost ready to cry with her work, for she had stuck the pointed sticks into the damp peas so many times that the ends were quite soft, and wouldn't stick into anything or hold on at all; but auntie told her not to mind, but gave her some other sticks, and helped her to begin afresh.

I'd got my square all right, so I laid it on the table, and then I took four sticks all of the same size, and I stuck them in the four peas to make them stand up for the legs of a chair, and I put peas on them and then they didn't seem as firm as auntie's. She said I had better put four sticks between them to strengthen them; so when I had done this, and she had put it a bit straight, she said it looked like the outline of a cube. I don't know what an outline is, and I don't think it looked much like the cubes we have in our building boxes, except it seemed as if you'd just got the edges and corners there, and all the middle was taken out; but I suppose auntie knows best.

Well, then I took two more sticks and stuck them on for the back of the chair, and put peas on the top of them, and a stick between; and after that I made rather a sharp point with fixing two sticks in one pea, and this I put at the top of the back of the chair, and it looked so nice and pretty, I was quite delighted. It was not as pretty as auntie's chair of course, but then auntie is bigger than me, and when I am a woman like her, I shall be able to make chairs with arms and rockers like she does. But I brought my chair home to papa in the evening, and he was so pleased with it, and he locked it up in the big iron safe that he keeps in his dressing-room.

JANE MILL.

## WILLIE'S DREAM.

THE BEST SOLUTION OF THE EIGHTY-FOURTH PICTURE STORY.

It was a smiling summer's day,
As Willie Kent, in search of play,
  Strayed down a shady lane,
Bordered with trees at either side,
Within whose shelter large and wide
  The birds alone did reign.

The pretty little harmless birds,
Who asked for pity—not with words,
  But in their happy song—
For their wee nestlings now so warm
Within their nest all safe from harm,
  That none would do them wrong.

Willie was really not unkind,
But thoughtless, and he did not mind
  The mother's plaintive cry;
But clambered up a tall oak tree,
Where in their warm nest cosily
  Six little birds did lie.

The sorrowing mother hovered near,
And begged the boy, in doubt and fear,
  Her little ones to spare;
But careless Willie would not heed,
He thought not of the cruel deed,
  Nor of the mother's care.

In joy he carried off the prize,
Despite the mother's plaintive cries;
  He thought not of her grief;
He thought not that the birds would die
Without their mother's watchful eye,
  Nor that he was a thief.

Holding the nest with steady hand,
Will then came down, but there did stand
  Beneath the spreading tree;
A gentleman of kindly mien
The careless Willie just had seen
  Taking the nestlings wee.

"Oh! wherefore have you thus bereaved"—
He said to Will, in accents grieved—
  "The mother of her young?
She who, a little time ago,
Was happy, thinking not of foe,
  As by her nest she sung."

"I'll put them in a cage," said Will,
"And feed them carefully."—"But still,"
  The gentleman then said,
"They'd live not in a cage confined;
You surely would not be unkind,
  For they would soon be dead.

"Without a mother's sheltering wing
These birds will never live to sing
  Bright, happy, gay, and free:
What would you say if monster tall
Seized you, not heeding cry or call,
  How cruel it would be!

"And if this monster took you then,
Imprisoned you in cage or den,
  Until perhaps you died,
How you would wish for parents' care!
For home you'd pine, to be safe there
  At your fond mother's side.

"These little birds can grieve as well,
Although their grief they cannot tell.
  Oh! will you not restore
The nest?" But Willie, selfish lad,
Bore quickly off the nest he had,
  And stayed to hear no more.

He took them home and left them there;
Oh! how they cried for mother's care!
  And then they would not eat.
So thoughtless Willy sauntered on,
And lastly threw himself upon
  A soft and mossy seat.

He lay there thinking o'er the words
The man had said about the birds;
  And then he fell asleep;
And then he dreamt. He thought he stood
Upon the lane close by the wood,
  When o'er him there did sweep

A monstrous bird of hideous form,
Which quickly filled him with alarm
  As soon it came quite near;
Oh, such a monster! with a face
That the most dreadful witch might grace;
  He screamed aloud with fear.

And oh the talons that it had!
And then such eyes! The frightened lad
  Seemed chained unto the spot:
He tried to flee, but with a scream,
The lad then fancied in his dream,
  That he was firmly caught.

The monster then young Willie bore:
Its talons long and sharp soon tore
  The poor boy's flesh and clothes;
It bore him where he ne'er had been,
Where precipices dark were seen,
  Where mountain peaks arose.

And then a dreadful mountain steep,
So rocky, Will thought in his sleep,
  That he was carried there,
Where waited monsters like the one
That seized poor Will when all alone,
  Its young he knew they were.

With fearful yells they gathered round
The bleeding lad upon the ground,
  And then the monster spoke:—
"This is the wicked, cruel boy,
Who all the young birds doth destroy
  In every elm and oak.

"What shall be done with him?" Will heard
The monster say: "Of every bird
  He is the dreaded foe;
Each of our tribe that e'er has been
Within his hands has ne'er been seen,
  He must be punished so."

With faces fierce the creatures stared
At Will; he would not now be spared,
In vain he now did mourn
That from the cosy mother's nest,
From her who could provide the best,
The nestlings he had borne.

"Too late! too late!" he cried. But then
The hideous monster spoke again,
In dreadful hissing tones:—
"Imprisoned in a cage he'll be,
As he has done to birds." Then he
Was seized, despite his moans.

Torn and bleeding he was borne
Unto a cage, then left to mourn
His now unhappy fate.
And then when he was close confined,
Oh! how he wished he had been kind!
But now it was too late.

But oh! what monster yon was that
That glared at him? 'twas like a cat,
But oh! so very great.
'Twould surely break his prison door,
And then all with him would be o'er,
Oh! what a dreadful fate!

He crept far back into the cage,
While the fierce monster in a rage
Gave a most dreadful scream:—
But suddenly the dream was gone,
Will woke to find himself alone,
For it was but a dream.

And oh! how glad was Will to find
That 'twas a dream! but in his mind
Its memory lingered still.
He saw how cruel he had been;
And there upon that bank so green
A dream had changed young Will.

"I will no longer cruel be"!—
He cried, and one could plainly see
He meant that which he spoke.
He then went home now to restore,
The nest with haste he quickly bore
And placed it in the oak.

I know not if he had more dreams,
But now another boy he seems,
So good he doth appear;
To all dumb animals he's kind,
Not one by him is now confined,
The birds have nought to fear.

The meetings always he attends
Where some kind people who are friends
To animals now meet.
But unforgotten by the lad
Remains the dream that Willie had
Upon that mossy seat.

MARIE A. M. (14).

*Camp, Tralee,*
*Kerry.*

## PICTURE STORY.

### No. LXXXVI.

HONOURABLE MENTION.—Etta J. B., Lillie D., Ethel L. M., Frances E. B., Alice B. B., Constance F. B., Gertrude M. G., Catherine M. W., Emily L., Kate O. P., Isabel J. P., Fanny E. D., Helen and Lily M., Florence E. C. J., Georgie E. P., Alice L. M., Beatrice R. F., Kittie B., Edith M. P., Lucy M. W., Florence B. C., Emma E. P., Catherine W. H. J., Sybilla C. Bessie C. M'D., Fanny H. S., Lydia F., Florence A. L., Alice T. P., Clara M., Georgina M., Aimée S. C. T., Annabella M., Jenny M., Amy C. W., Constance M., Annie E. W., Catherine A. E., Ethel M. J., Alice W., Flora C. B., Mabel S. M., Sarah N., Agnes E. G., Kate E. D., Helen S., Harriet A. C., Katherine L. S., Mary H. S., Ella H., Frederica G.; Percy B., Henry T., William M. B., Frank L. P., Arthur T. V. B., Hugh M. G., Percy S. M., George B. M.

Again we tender our cordial thanks for kind wishes, New Year cards, photographs, book-markers, pen-wipers, an iced plum cake from Fanny E. D., her own making, and very nice. We feel it a delightful thing to have such loving friends.

EDITOR.

[AGATHA ON HER MISSION.]

## AUNT MILLICENT'S CHARGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SOLDIER HAROLD," &C.

### CHAPTER III.—MISS GREY'S SUNDAY CLASS.

AUNT MILLICENT had told Agatha that she had six little girls to teach; but two of them would have been highly indignant to hear themselves called "little." Lydia Eldridge was fourteen, and her close companion, Ellen Firbank, a year older. These two walked off ahead of the rest, glad to escape from the close atmosphere of the little white-washed cottage room—which was the only place that Miss Grey could get in which to hold her class—into the pure air of the summer afternoon.

"I don't think I shall go again," said Lydia, with a toss of her head. "I am sure I shall never like Miss Grey if she treats us in this sort of way: we might be babies! I am not going to learn lessons and say them to her. You and I have done with all that sort of thing, Ellen."

"I should think so indeed! But I must say I did feel ashamed not to be able to say those few lines she set us. Your little Rose said them perfectly."

"The collect, you mean? oh, that's just what suits Rose; but it isn't to my taste. Come, let us take a turn on the cliffs, Ellen; it will be so pleasant after old Dame Dorking's little poky room."

Following these two, but more slowly, and with their arms lovingly entwined round each other's waists, came Rose Eldridge and Martha Bird. They too were talking of the class and their teacher, but in a different strain from their elders.

It was quite a new thing in the village, was this Sunday teaching. For you must know, dear

reader, that the time of which we are writing was some years ago, when poor children were not so well cared for in the way of instruction; and Rothwell was a little, out-of-the-way, neglected village; the only school of any sort being Dame Dorking's, where little else but a very moderate amount of reading and writing and plain sewing was taught; and Lydia and Ellen considered themselves long past that,—in fact, they had only come this afternoon out of curiosity. Ellen was apprenticed to a dressmaker at Long Marston, and was engaged all the week, so that Sunday afternoon was the only time that the two friends could have together now.

"Oh, Martha, didn't you like what Miss Grey said?" Rose remarked, with energy. "I wish I could remember it all."

"Yes, and do it," answered Martha. "I shall long for next Sunday, shall not you, Rose? But I wonder what Miss Grey would have said if she had known that I came without leave? I expect grannie will be rare and angry when I get back; but I don't care! I am very glad I came."

"Well, never mind about that now; do help me to remember what she said. It seemed when she was talking as if I should never be naughty again; but I don't know, I am afraid I shall."

"Miss Grey said that the dear Lord Jesus was always near us to help us if we go to Him, and I mean to. And oh, Rose, isn't it nice to think that the good God up in heaven takes care of us, and won't let anything harm us? that collect we learnt says so. And so, you know, whatever happens, we need not be troubled a bit."

"Not if your grannie is cross?"

"No," answered Martha, with a bright smile, "I do not think I shall mind; I really don't think I shall."

"I am afraid I shall," answered Rose, with a half-sigh. "Oh, there's Lydia and Ellen gone off on to the cliffs! what will mother say? She told Lydia to be sure to come straight home, for I know she wants to go to church this evening."

"Here's the turn up to your house, and my way lies to the left, so we must say good-bye, Rosie; don't forget."

The cottage where John Eldridge lived was a little way out of the village; it was built on a bit of waste land that lay near the sea, a little quiet peaceful nook with a rock at the back and a patch of garden ground in front sloping towards the south, with a beautiful view of the bay. John Eldridge had laid claim to the land and made his home there some half dozen years previously; and the old squire, an easy-going man, who let things alone very much, had said nothing about it; and as it did not interfere with any one's comfort or convenience, John thought he had a perfect right to it.

You would not have liked to live in such a house, though it was covered with roses, for it was a very tiny place, but to John Eldridge and his *family it was home,* and that was everything.

Rose ran down the sandy lane that led to it, and up the garden path. Her mother looked up as she entered through the open door. Two little ones were playing on the floor, and the mother had a still younger child on her lap.

"Where is Lydia?" she asked almost before Rose got into the house.

"I don't know, mother," Rose answered, without thinking; and then, immediately after, she remembered, but did not like to call back her words.

"I wish she would come in. I suppose she has had as much time to come back as you have. Little Bob is very restless, and won't be content in the cradle a minute, and I want her to take him."

"Oh, mother," said Rose, eagerly, "do let me hold Bob! I am sure I can."

But the little baby boy was far too precious to be entrusted to Rose's care, though she had often nursed her little sisters; and her mother did not think it worth while to answer her request. She only said,—

"Go and take off your things, and then you can amuse Annie and Jennie a bit till Lydia comes in."

Rose lingered a little longer upstairs than was quite necessary; she was trying to think over what her kind teacher had been telling her, and when she came down again she found her father and brother in the kitchen, so she had to set the table and get the tea ready. As they were sitting down to it John Eldridge inquired where Lydia was.

"I am sure I don't know," answered the mother, with a weary sigh; "Lydia is getting quite beyond me."

"She went on the cliff with Ellen Firbank after we left school," said Rose, forgetting what she had said before.

Her mother turned round sharply upon her. "Why, you told me you knew nothing about her, Rose! Is that what Miss Grey has been teaching you,—to say one thing and mean another?"

"No, mother; I forgot."

"Well, if she is with that Ellen, we shall not see her any more till bedtime."

After she had put the little kitchen straight Rose came and stood wistfully by her mother. She scarcely liked to offer her services again, and yet it did seem such a pity for her mother to be obliged to stay at home from church, for she knew how much she had wished to go, and may be Mr. Grey's words would be as helpful to her as Miss Grey's had been that afternoon.

But when little Bob was undressed for the night and laid in his cradle, she ventured to suggest,—

"Don't you think you could trust him to me just for once, mother? I would be so very careful."

"Why, may be you would take as much care of him as Lydia would, Rose. But we will see, there is plenty of time yet."

And just as the bells were beginning to chime, Lydia appeared, threw down her hat on the table and herself into a chair, as if thoroughly exhausted.

"So you have condescended to show yourself at last. Where have you been?"

"I have been having tea with Ellen. And, mother, she says there is another apprentice wanted at her place, down at Long Marston; so it's just the opening for me, it is what I have been longing for ever since Ellen went. You will see about it to-morrow for me, won't you, mother?"

"We must hear what father says about it first. I am not at all sure that it would be good for you, you see quite enough of that Ellen as it is."

"Oh, but, mother, I *must* go, *that* is settled. It is far too good a chance to lose."

"Well I can settle nothing to-night, whatever you may. Come, Rose, it is quite time you and I set off for church."

Rose sprang up joyfully. But it was a silent walk, and Mrs. Eldridge sighed deeply once or twice.

At length Rose slipped her hand into her mother's, and said softly,—

"Mother, are you thinking about Lydia? Don't trouble. Miss Grey said this afternoon that the good God up in heaven orders all things, so I am sure He won't let any harm come to Lydia. She will be all right, you'll see, mother."

Perhaps Mrs. Eldridge was not sorry there was no opportunity for a reply, as they had just reached the church door.

## Chapter IV.—The Seaweed Gatherers.

Martha Bird did not run home eagerly and quickly as Rose had done; she had no kind mother to welcome her, nobody but Willie who would be at all glad to see her. For Martha and Willie were orphans,—at least, they had no mother, and they lived with their grandmother, who looked upon them as a burden.

However, Martha's lagging feet brought her at last to the cottage door. As she stood on the door-step with her hand on the latch, her heart went up with a swift earnest cry for help to be patient, and not to answer again if her grandmother was angry; and then she went in.

But only her brother was there. He was standing by the window busy with something, and the floor was strewed all over with bits of straw.

"What, are you all by yourself, Willie? that is nice! Was grannie very angry when she found I had gone?"

"Ay, wasn't she just! I was glad you were not here to hear her, Martha. But have you had a pleasant time?"

"Oh yes, it was delightful! worth any amount of scolding. But what are you doing? Making baskets to-day! Oh, Willie!"

"Well, I cannot help it!" and a hard, sullen look came over Willie's face as he spoke. "Grandmother made me. She says I am to have half a dozen done by to-morrow night; Cleavers want them, and how can I possibly do it unless I work to-day?"

Willie had been taught by the old basket-maker up the village how to make the common straw fish-baskets, and he earned a little now and then by supplying one of the fish-shops at Long Marston with them.

Martha stood musing for a minute.

"I think I would try, Willie. Do you think I could help you any way to-morrow? I am sure you ought not to do it to-day."

"Why, last Sunday you would have said it didn't matter, Martha; that it was best to please grannie at any cost. I know you would."

"Ah, but I know better now. I know that we must try to please the dear Lord Jesus first, and He says we are not to work on Sunday."

"Come, then! Grannie has some work for you to do, will you do it?"

"Grannie has! where is she?"

"She has gone on the sands to pick up sea-weed. Markham was in just now, and he said there has been a high tide, and there is rare spoil to be got. So off she set at once, and she told me to be sure and send you with a big basket as soon as you came back."

"Oh, Willie, I am sorry! what shall I do?"

"Nay, I know what I should do,—follow grannie as fast as my legs could carry me. I expect she would have made me go with her if I hadn't had this to do. But you must please yourself, Martha."

Martha stood a minute, hesitating.

"I suppose I must go," she said at last, slowly, "or grannie will be so angry. But, oh, I wish she had not wanted me to."

"I think you had best go," answered Willie, with a slight smile. "It is hard to keep grannie in good humour any way."

But Martha did not set off at once, she stood with her elbows on the table beside Willie, and her chin resting on her hands.

"Willie," she said at last, "something Miss Grey said this afternoon reminded me of mother. Don't you remember her last words? But no, you were too little, and I had quite forgotten till to-day, but it all comes back to me now. And when I shut my eyes I can see it all just as it was,—her pale face on the pillow, and father lifting you and me up to kiss her, and her cheek was so cold; and I can almost hear her small weak voice saying, 'Lord Jesus, bless my little children, and make them Thy lambs.'"

The tears stood in Martha's eyes, but Willie went on with his work and did not speak. After a minute he said,—

"I wonder when father will come back to us, Martha. I don't like living with grandmother."

"I think he will come back some time, and when he does he will be glad to hear that we have been good children, Willie."

"Well, you be good, and go to grannie."

Martha very much questioned whether that

would be "being good;" however, she had no choice but to go.

She thought if she could summon up courage she would ask Miss Grey about it some time, but it could not be until the next Sunday at the earliest, and she wanted to know now.

Perhaps grannie would be ready to come away when she got to the sands. But no, there she was, ever so far off, toiling eagerly after the seaweed. She did not see Martha until she was close to her. Then she straightened herself up, and laid her strong hand on the little girl's shoulder.

"You idle, good-for-nothing child! where have you been?"

"I have been to Miss Grey's Sunday class, grannie. I did not know you would want me."

"What didn't you ask leave for? She's no business to run away with my children. I shall tell her so! But now you have come set to work, and fill that basket. You see there's plenty, and mayhap by another tide it will be all gone."

"Oh, grandmother, must I? to-day? won't to-morrow do? I'll work so hard to-morrow! I'll be here by five o'clock if you will only let it wait, grannie."

"Hold your tongue, and do as I bid you. By to-morrow Mary Clayton and all the rest of them will be here, and we should only have one chance among many then; and I can't afford to lose this bit of advantage. Keep well under these rocks, and no one will see you; and by and by when the folks have got off to church we can go further out."

Martha did not venture to say any more; and she thought as she had to do it, the best way was to do it as well and as fast as she could, that they might have done the sooner; and she got on so quickly that her grandmother gave her a word of praise—a rare thing, for old Sally Bird's tongue was far more ready to blame than to praise. Yet Martha was not happy, for she knew they were doing wrong.

Agatha from her sofa saw the two figures moving on the sands, and could not make out what they were doing. She was at home alone, save and except the little folks in the nursery, and one of the servants who had stayed to look after them; all the rest were at church. And Agatha, tired of her loneliness, was looking out for something to amuse her even from the window that she had despised.

What could they be after?—surely not gathering seaweed! Agatha had heard that the seaweed was valuable and useful, and could be sold, but that was no reason why they should get it on Sunday. She got up and went close to the window to be certain. Yes, she was not mistaken; that was what they were doing.

How she wished her papa were in, that he might go and speak to them! They must know *it was wrong. She did not so* much wonder at *the little girl, but the old* woman must know better; at any rate, they ought to be stopped, she was sure.

Agatha considered a minute. Would it be possible for her to go and tell them how wrong it was? The more she thought of it, the more the idea grew upon her that it was her duty to do it.

She knew there were some steps in the rock a very little way from the garden wall; Arnold had told her of them, and he showed her just where they were: if she could only get down there, the rest would be easy. Her back was almost well again; it pained her very little now; besides, if she suffered for it afterwards she must go, as there was no one else to do it.

There was a little pleasurable excitement, too, in the idea of how surprised aunt Millicent would be when she came back from church to find what she had done! So she threw over her head a little woollen shawl that lay on the sofa, and stepped out of the window. The air was cool and pleasant after the hot day, and Agatha stood a minute to enjoy it, but there was not much time to lose.

The walking was more difficult than she had imagined, and every step gave her pain, but she would not turn back. The sands looked so near, and it would be so delightful to be down upon them: besides, it was her duty to go; that old woman really ought to be stopped by somebody.

The steps in the rock were certainly not meant for an invalid like Agatha, and it was wonderful that she did not fall from the top to the bottom. However, she at length reached the sands in safety, but was so exhausted that she had to stop for several minutes to recover her breath, and the pain in her back almost made her sick.

But Agatha had a strong determined will of her own, and would not give in.

Martha and her grandmother were still unconscious that they were going to be interfered with. They were coming towards her, so Agatha waited until they were sufficiently near for them to hear her speak from the place where she stood. At last she called out,—

"What are you doing there? Don't you know it is Sunday?"

Old Sally started, and drew herself up to the full height of her tall straight figure; but looking round and only seeing Agatha she stared a minute, and then stooped down to her work again, taking no further notice of the interruption.

Five minutes passed, and she was startled again by a little thin white hand being laid on her arm.

"Don't you know that it is wrong to work on Sundays?"

"I know that it would be best for you to mind your own business!" said the woman, a little roughly. "Why, where have you come from? you look as if a feather would knock you down."

"Yes, I have been ill, but I could not bear to see you doing wrong, so I came to tell you."

"Very considerate of you, certainly," said old Sally, with a slight sneer. "I suppose you belong to the new clergyman?"

"Yes, I am Miss Grey."

"Oh, no, no!" exclaimed Martha, almost immediately; "Miss Grey taught us this afternoon, and it was not you."

"What!" said Agatha, turning round upon her, "were you in aunt Millicent's class? I am afraid you have not taken much notice of what she told you, else you would not be here."

"Martha's got to do as *I* tell her; and if you had somebody to look after you, young miss, it would be all the better for you."

Agatha had not expected this sort of treatment, and she did not at all like it; her cheeks flushed and she grew angry.

"You ought not to gather seaweed on Sunday! you know you ought not; it is very bad of you; go home directly!"

"Come," said old Sally, roused in her turn, "we've had plenty of this; I am not going to be taught by a child like you.—Go on, Martha, and fill your basket. I shall gather as much seaweed as ever I have a mind to."

Martha, who had hoped that Agatha's words might have been of some use, heaved a deep sigh as she turned to her work again.

Somehow Agatha felt that her mission had failed, and she turned to go; but she became suddenly conscious that her strength had failed too, and, with a sharp cry, she would have fallen, had not old Sally caught her in her strong arms.

"You ought to be in bed instead of talking here," she said.

"Carry me to the top of the cliffs, please," said Agatha, faintly.

Sally brought her to the garden gate, and as she put her down she said, not unkindly, "You had best keep to what belongs to you another time, miss; may be I know as much about things as you do, but I don't go interfering with what does not concern me."

Agatha was too ill to make any answer.

How she got back again to her sofa she did not know, but she was most thankful to be there.

## Chapter V.—Agatha's Mistake.

"Agatha, my darling, what have you been doing? What has happened?—What has made her so ill, nurse?" aunt Millicent asked, in a tone of extreme anxiety, for on her return from church she had found Agatha suffering such intense pain as to be almost unable to speak.

"I am sure I don't know, ma'am," nurse answered. "I found Miss Agatha like this when I came in, and Sarah could not tell me anything about it. She has not been downstairs all the time. Miss Eva was restless, and she could not leave her."

"Well, something must be done to relieve the poor child. I cannot bear to see her suffering like this."

"Never mind, auntie," gasped Agatha, "I shall soon be better; the pain is not so bad as it was."

But it was nearly an hour before Agatha was able to tell her aunt what had brought it on.

"I did not know it would make me ill, aunt Millicent. I thought I was almost strong again; and I did so want to tell that old woman that she was doing wrong."

"I dare say she would not thank you for telling her, Agatha."

"No, she was quite cross, but she ought not to have been. It was my duty to go, auntie."

"I rather think your duty was to stay here on this sofa, Agatha."

"Oh no, aunt Millicent, you are quite mistaken there. If the old woman took no notice, that could not make any difference to what it was right for me to do; and oh, auntie, what do you think?" and there was a slight tone of unconscious satisfaction in Agatha's voice as she went on: "the little girl that was with her was one of your class this afternoon. What do you say to that?"

"Of course you don't know who it was?"

"No; only that the old woman called her Martha."

"What, little Martha Bird? Oh, I hope not. She was the most attentive of the whole class, and I thought she listened as if she felt what I was saying."

"Well, she was there, anyhow, breaking the Sabbath, auntie."

"Agatha, we must not judge too hastily nor too harshly. How do you know that Martha was not as sorry to be there as you were to see her there?"

"I don't think she was sorry at all," persisted Agatha, "or else she would have gone away."

Mr. Grey came in at that moment, and Agatha, expecting more praise from him than she had received from aunt Millicent, told him what she had been doing.

"But, my little girl, you must be very careful what you do or say, especially now when we are just fresh comers, else you will very possibly do more harm than good."

Agatha did not quite like being called "little girl," especially after she had performed such a wonderful feat.

"Why, papa, was it not right and proper to do it? Would not you have done it if you had been here and seen it?"

Agatha's "it" was rather vague, but Mr. Grey understood her.

"I am not at all sure that I should, Agatha."

"Well, *I* could not bear to see the old woman at work on Sunday, anyhow," answered Agatha, a little pettishly.

"My dear child, far be it from me to wish to lessen in any degree your reverence for God's holy Sabbath, but there is such a thing as 'zeal which is not according to knowledge,' and I think you showed it in this instance. What could you, a new-comer, tell of the character of the woman? Besides, those who reprove others ought to be exceedingly careful

how they do it. 'Speaking the truth in love;' did you follow that rule, Agatha?"

Agatha was silent, for she knew she had not done so. She knew—though she would not acknowledge it for the world—that her speaking had done more harm than good.

"Put yourself in her place. Would you like to have been found fault with by one so much younger, a perfect stranger, and before a little granddaughter? Do you think it would have had much effect, Agatha?"

"No, papa," was the answer, in a low tone.

"I think, my child, if you think the matter well over, you will see that you have made a mistake. Your place yet awhile is to be a learner rather than a teacher."

"But, papa, is it not right for us to do all the good we can? I am sure I thought it was."

"Most certainly," said Mr. Grey, with a slight smile, 'but example is always a better teacher than precept.' *Be* good, and then you will *do* good. I don't want to discourage you, my dear child," he went on, seeing Agatha's face look very downcast, "but you must not always follow just where the impulse of the moment leads you. Your duty just now is to get well and strong, and then we will talk about the work you can do in the world; meantime I think you had best leave the old woman of Rothwell to me. But do not misunderstand me. Your motive was good, but you did not go very wisely to work about it, and have only succeeded in making yourself ill."

Agatha certainly suffered for her mistake. She was going on so well before, that she was quite looking forward to being able in a day or two to roam about with her brothers, exploring the new country; but now she would have to be confined to her sofa for two or three weeks longer at the least. And very weary work it was. Everybody got heartily tired, and wished over and over again—if not aloud, as nurse did, yet inwardly—that Agatha had not been so foolish.

## LILY, THE LITTLE SERVANT GIRL.

### In Two Parts.—Part Second.

Probably her mother would be more delighted at another sight, but that never occurred to Lily. At last, when she was beginning to feel very tired, for, as I have said, she was far from strong, she saw, but still in the distance, dirty, smoky Halford, and in another quarter of an hour's quick walking she arrived at the street in which her mother lived, and in a few moments at the house, and was clasped in her mother's arms.

What a delightful day it was! and how glad they all were to see her! She was quite a little heroine amongst them when she related her adventures, especially her adventures with the goat.

*Evening came too soon*, she thought. It had previously been arranged between her mother and her mistresses that she was to stay as long as the latter wanted her. They were well pleased with her. As soon as she was ready to return, Robert and Eliza, her eldest brother and sister, prepared to walk with her a part of the way. They accompanied her as far as the village of Moorlands, about half the distance of her walk, and stood watching her as she descended the hill towards Cackleton till she had passed from their sight.

When Lily was well settled, Mary requested permission to go home for a week, and as Miss Weatherby was very much better,—indeed, able to go out a little, she obtained consent.

Mary's going home was different from Lily's; she had a long journey by rail. Lily was very busy indeed while Mary was away, for though Miss Lucy helped, there were many things which Lily said, in a very womanly way, she should be sorry to let Miss Lucy do. So it came about that Miss Lucy took as many as she could of Lily's duties, and Lily supplied Mary's place as well as she was able. The goat Miss Lucy decided to take charge of, having an idea that she should have no difficulty in managing her; but Nanny soon undeceived her. The first morning, as she was airily leading her out to the field, Lily having milked her, Nanny, giving a sudden tug at her chain, one end of which the young lady carelessly held, quickly made her escape. In a few moments she had mounted the stable, and stood, it seemed, mischievously gazing down at her discomfited attendant. Miss Lucy certainly looked rather crestfallen as she went for Lily's help. Meanwhile Nanny quietly ate at the leaves of a fine horse-chestnut, the boughs of which hung over the stable. It was with considerable difficulty that they got her down, for coaxing had no effect upon her, and she was afterwards several times so troublesome, that the young lady was most willing to relinquish her charge on Mary's return.

As summer waned, Lily felt quite at home in her place, and became a great favourite with her mistress. Even Mary allowed that whatever she did she did well. Several times during the summer she went home, sometimes for a whole day, but often only for the afternoon. As the days grew shorter her visits ceased; but her mistresses promised to allow her to go home for a few days at Christmas. November, however, had not yet come in. So many weeks had to pass away before Christmas; but Lily naturally looked forward to her visit with great delight, planning what she would do while there. In fact, when she thought of her visit she could have danced with glee, and very likely did so when she was alone.

Poor little Lily! Most mercifully does our heavenly Father keep the future from us. Did we know it, how much it would unfit us for the present! Grown-up people know the truth of this. But none need *fear* the future whose "treasure is laid up in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break

through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Lily was doubly diligent and careful in doing her work, to show her gratitude to her kind mistresses, and so the days sped away.

It was towards the close of November when Miss Weatherby was taken much worse; and at the same time Mary, their servant, took a most severe cold in her throat and chest. The doctor daily came to see Miss Weatherby, sometimes in a morning, sometimes in an afternoon. One afternoon, after he had seen his patient, he requested Miss Lucy to send to his house for fresh medicine, and without giving the young lady time to reply, he hurriedly departed. Miss Lucy's position was certainly a trying one; her sister very ill, and Mary, upon whom she always depended to fetch the medicine at so late an hour, confined to bed. She hesitated long about sending Lily, but she could not leave her sister, so there was no one else to do the errand. The child was most willing and anxious to go; so, warmly wrapped up—for the afternoon was intensely cold—she set out.

It was almost dusk, but snow had fallen, which made it appear lighter than it otherwise would have done.

Lily bravely trudged on, down the fields, through the gate, and over the bridge which led from the house. It was the having to cross the bridge which had made Miss Lucy hesitate about sending her: not that it was unsafe; it was quite safe, being a strong stone one. The property on one side of it belonged partly to herself and her sister, and was well fenced from the water; on the other side it belonged to a nobleman, Lord Earlston, and was quite unprotected. Any one coming along the path on a dark night, with the intention of crossing the bridge, might, unless very careful, easily walk into the water; not that, unless the brook was much swollen, was there enough to drown a grown-up person, or even a moderately tall child, but the bank was steep and high; a fall therefrom might cause serious injury, if nothing worse.

The time of Lily's absence appeared very long to Miss Lucy, anxious as she was for the medicine for her sister. If Lily had not to wait at the doctor's, she might easily be back in an hour, but when more than an hour had passed away she had still not returned. Miss Lucy felt very uneasy, and when at length her sister, wearied with pain, had fallen into a restless doze, she crept softly from the room and went to Mary. Poor Mary's cold was not much better; she could only speak in a hoarse whisper. She did not think that there was cause for anxiety; Lily knew the road quite well; doubtless she had to wait at the doctor's; very likely she would soon be here now; and Mary groaned and turned irritably round in her bed, cross at being disturbed. Still her mistress could not feel easy, and seeing that her sister yet slept, she put a warm shawl over her head and went out.

Lily had been away more than two hours, so there was cause for Miss Lucy's uneasiness. The night, from being calm but intensely cold, had changed. The wind was rising, and snow was falling fast and in large flakes. For a moment or two Miss Lucy stood listening, and thought that she heard no sound save the parish church clock striking seven, and the wind rushing through the leafless trees, but she was doubtful. She did not move. She listened more intently. There was a noise. Surely it was not a cry or scream! Her heart beating fast, she waited for its repetition, when, clearly and distinctly, the wind bearing the sound towards her, it was repeated.

There could be no mistake. Some human being was in peril, crying for help, and Miss Lucy, her mind full of anxiety about Lily, feared lest it might be she. Hastily but quietly running upstairs to see if her sister still slept, and finding that she did, and that calmly too, as if freer from pain, she again threw on her shawl, and lighting a lantern, noiselessly opened the door and went out. Down the fields she ran at her utmost speed, and soon gained the bridge. For a few moments she stopped there to listen, but hearing nothing, she called, "Lily, Lily, where are you?" A faint moan answered her, and then Miss Lucy knew that it was indeed Lily. She quickly scrambled down the embankment at the spot whence the noise proceeded, and found her lying helplessly in the water, her face being the only part of her above it, and in one little lifeless hand was the bottle of medicine. Miss Lucy spoke to her, but she did not answer, and thinking that she had fainted, or was numbed with the cold, she put down her lantern on a large stone which stood out of the water, took her up in her arms, and, as well as she was able, wrapped her in her own warm shawl, which she had taken off for the purpose.

To ascend the embankment, however, so burdened, she found was impossible, for besides its steepness the clayey soil was slippery and wet with the snow. It was equally impossible to ascend on the other side, as the banks were still steeper, and there was the fence at the top. All she could do was to hold Lily and shout for help, which, as the field paths were not much frequented in winter, was, she feared, almost hopeless expecting. She was beginning to feel incapable of holding the child much longer when her cries were heard, some one came running to her assistance. By the light of her lantern Miss Lucy saw that it was a gentleman, tall and strong-looking. He quickly got down to her, took Lily from her arms, and as if her weight were nothing to him, bade the young lady take his unoccupied arm, and so, she carrying the lantern and the bottle of medicine, they reached the path.

Miss Lucy begged the gentleman to take the child to her house, fearfully asking if he thought she were dead, and saying that perhaps she had better go for the doctor. He assured her that the little girl was not dead, and that to fetch a doctor was unnecessary, for that he was one himself. It was an intense relief to Miss Lucy to hear that he

was a doctor, but now that the strain upon her nerves was not so great, and also being relieved of her burden, and her anxiety somewhat calmed, she began to feel the intense cold, and shivered and shook so that she could scarcely hold the light, which the doctor perceiving, and noting also for the first time, that she was without shawl, and very wet, he hastily took off a plaid which he wore, and as well as he was able with one hand wrapped it round her shoulders, and so they walked on, poor little Lily beginning to moan pitifully. Before they arrived at the house, Miss Lucy in a few words—for the strong wind and the snow left little breath for talking—told her companion how ill her sister was, but that she had left her sleeping. He understood her motive for telling him, and was careful on entering to make as little noise as possible. She led the way through the kitchen, and was much surprised but very pleased to see Mary sitting there by the fire, into their small dining-room, where also a bright fire burnt. Gently the doctor laid his burden upon a couch. Even yet the child was hardly conscious, but, moaned as if in pain. A little weak brandy and water seemed to do her good, and the doctor insisted upon Miss Lucy taking some and immediately changing her wet clothes. Her sister was awake when she entered the room, but Miss Lucy decided that it would not be wise to tell her of Lily's accident till the morning. Her long and refreshing sleep had done her good, and after she had taken the medicine she seemed so composed and tranquil, that Miss Lucy, promising to return as soon as possible, left her. She found Lily in great pain. Her wet clothes had been taken off, and wrapped up in blankets she lay on the couch, which had been drawn close to the fire. The doctor had gone, but promised to see her again in the morning. He advised her being kept all night where she was, as the slightest movement gave her great pain. He had told Mary that he had taken the late Dr. Ryder's practice at Moorlands, and that his name was Ainslie. He was returning from visiting a patient when Miss Lucy's cries for help attracted his attention, but for some time he could not find out where they came from. But what seemed to have much astonished Mary was his recognition of Lily, till he explained that he had often seen her when a medical student in Halford, and that he had known her parents well.

The next morning, though still in great pain, the poor child was able to tell them, in answer to Mary's questions, that she had to wait for the medicine, and on her return the darkness and the quickly falling snow had so blinded and bewildered her that she could not find the bridge, and had unconsciously, in her endeavours to do so, walked into the water, but she thought that she had not been in very long when Miss Lucy came.

Dr. Ainslie had feared that her spine had been injured by the fall, and on examination it proved to be so, only more seriously than he had anticipated. *She was not to* be moved, even if she could bear the pain of removal. And so the days wore on, and the little household became accustomed to another invalid.

Mary soon recovered from her cold, and Miss Weatherby improved, but day by day Lily grew worse—not rapidly. At first it was rather no amendment than positive decline of strength. She was very patient, and bore her pain bravely. All was done for her that could be done, but it soon became evident that never again would the child be better. She would very much like to have been at home, especially when Christmas Day came, but it was impossible; so though she could not help quietly shedding a few tears about it, she would not give way to her grief, because she thought that the sight of it might trouble her mother. Her mother or her eldest sister was always with her, and almost daily Dr. Ainslie came to see her at the Miss Weatherbys' request, and she learned to love the tall, strong man who was so gentle and tender to her. Miss Weatherby was able to leave her room, and often came to sit with Lily, and then they had long talks about that better land to which the child was fast hastening.

In her days of health Lily had loved the Saviour and tried to serve Him, so she had not to learn about Him for the first time in sickness It was one cold Sunday morning, more than twelve weeks after the beginning of her illness, that the end drew nigh. While the bells were ringing for service the messenger of God came for the child, and with a smile of peace her spirit departed.

So calmly, so like falling asleep had been her death, that her mother, and all who were watching her, could scarcely believe that she was gone—gone to that better land where there is no more pain, no more struggles with sin, for the former things are passed away.

They buried her in a corner of the quiet churchyard, where in summer the leafy trees shade her grave, and the birds sing in their branches. There the summer following her death, "Baby" and the young ones were brought to hear the story of sister Lily. Years have passed away since then, and Ash Cottage, as the Miss Weatherbys' house was called, is to let, the sisters are gone away, but in the village of Moorlands Miss Lucy, or rather Mrs. Ainslie, is beloved amongst rich and poor for her kind heart and good deeds. Her sister, for the present, has her home with a widowed aunt in the south of France. Beneath its sunny skies she is regaining health and strength.

## EDITORIAL NOTICES.

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# SUNSHINE.

EDITED BY W. M. WHITTEMORE, D.D., RECTOR OF ST. KATHERINE CREE, LONDON.

No. 171. MARCH, 1876. [ONE PENNY.

[REMOVAL OF THE GIPSY ENCAMPMENT.]

## LITTLE ALINE.

A STORY OF GIPSY LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PET'S DIFFICULTIES."

### CHAPTER VII.—PARTING.

As they walked back to the Hall, Ethel was so eagerly talking to her mamma about her new little dog, and the name which he should have, that home was reached before the remembrance of her mother's hidden trouble flashed across her mind.

There was not time then to allude to it, especially as the servant who opened the door informed her mistress that Mr. Raymond wished to see her directly she came in.

"There is a gentleman with master, ma'am; Mr. Crayshaw."

"Mr. Crayshaw; oh, I know," said Mrs. Raymond, rather to herself than to any one else; and she passed on at once to her husband's study.

Ethel took off her hat, and as she could not

repeat her lessons to her mother for the next half-hour, she sat down to practise her music lesson. She had never been to school, nor yet had any governess at home. All the instruction she had received had been given her by her mother. Mrs. Raymond had a good deal of leisure time, for their visitors were few, and her husband, when at home, was often in his library, and did not care to be disturbed. Ethel was a delicate little girl. Her health, when a tiny child, had caused her mother much anxiety, but she was growing stronger year by year, and rarely complained of not feeling well. Mrs. Raymond had not kept her close to her studies. She did not approve, at any time, of forcing children on like little hothouse plants; and when, as in Ethel's case, the health was weak, she wisely thought it was better that the brain should not be overtasked. So in fine weather Ethel spent the greater part of the day in the open air.

It was in this way that she was so frequently at the farm. There were so many inducements there for her to run about and get all the outdoor exercise which she required. Margaret had been her nurse in infancy, and had only left Mrs. Raymond's service to marry Philip Atherton, her playmate from childhood. Some persons said that Philip might have looked higher for a wife; but Margaret was by no means a common young woman. She had been a village schoolmistress, but close confinement did not suit her any more than it suited Ethel; and when Mrs. Raymond was inquiring for some one to take charge of her little girl, Margaret offered herself for the situation, and was gladly accepted. She was not only Ethel's nurse, but frequently her mother's companion as well. Mrs. Raymond liked having her children with her, and Margaret was so intelligent and well informed, that her society was rather a pleasure than otherwise to her mistress. Margaret fully availed herself of the advantages of her position, and through being so much with Mrs. Raymond she acquired a refinement and gentleness of manner which did not fit her the less for becoming a respectable farmer's wife.

The farm to which Philip took her home, though a small, was a thriving one, for both Margaret and her husband worked hard that they might provide things honest in the sight of all men. That they did not act from any better motive in their daily life is not to be wondered at, for they neither of them possessed that love to God and that faith in His dear Son which leads us to strive to serve Him in our commonest actions.

Ethel and her mother were sitting that afternoon under an apple tree in the orchard; the one, working some fine embroidery, and the other playing quietly with her baby doll. After some minutes' silence, during which Mrs. Raymond let her work fall on her lap and looked dreamily at the flower-beds in the distance, Ethel, reminded of her mother's former gravity, said,—

"Mamma dear, you have not told me what was *troubling you this morning; what was it?*"

Mrs. Raymond did not seem in any hurry to tell now. She drew Ethel fondly towards her, and passing her hand caressingly over her hair, said slowly,—

"It is very hard to me to think of parting with my little girl."

"Part with *me*, mamma! what do you mean?" exclaimed Ethel, in astonishment. "You are not going to send me to school surely?"

"No, dear, not to school. How would you like to live with Margaret at the farm?"

It was the third time that this question had been asked her, and Ethel gazed in surprise at her mother. What could they all intend by putting such a question to her? There must be some reality in it, since her mother proposed it.

"I could not live at the farm without you, mamma, and why should I? We cannot be all going there?"

"No, dear; but papa is so unwell that Dr. Hilton says he must go abroad to a different climate as soon as possible,—that is, as soon as the necessary preparations can be made."

"Well, mamma, we could do without him; you could take care of me," said Ethel as Mrs. Raymond paused. Ethel thought that she should be quite as happy, if not happier when her papa was away than when he was at home. The next remark, however, altered her opinion on this point.

"But, Ethel, don't you see that if papa is sent from his home, I must go with him to attend to him and to comfort him?"

"What! and leave me behind? Mamma, you could not think of doing such a thing!"

"I wish I could help it, darling; I am as sorry about it as you are."

"But why cannot you take me abroad too?"

"There are too many difficulties in the way, dear, which you are hardly old enough to understand. It would not be convenient to have a little girl travelling with us in some of the places where we shall stay. Besides, papa will have to be kept exceedingly quiet, and I shall have to give up my whole time to him, so that I should scarcely see anything of you."

"Oh, mamma, I would not mind that," cried Ethel. "If I could only see you once in the day I would be satisfied, and I would not be a bit of trouble to you. I would brush and plait my own hair, and fasten the hooks of my frock quite straight."

Mrs. Raymond smiled, but it was a sad sort of a smile.

"I know you are a dear good child, Ethel, and would help me as much as you could. But it cannot be as you want, darling; papa and I have both decided that it cannot, and we have not decided hastily."

"It is all papa's fault, I am sure it is!" sobbed Ethel. "Oh, mamma, do promise that I shall go with you!"

Mrs. Raymond folded the child tenderly in her arms, and kissed her.

"My sensible little Ethel will not add to mamma's trouble by fretting about what neither of us can alter," she said, appealingly.

But Ethel was not in a sensible mood just then.

"Mamma, you could alter it if you chose, or at least you could make papa alter it; it is very unkind of you both to leave me here to be miserable."

"It will be trying just at first, dear," said her mother, soothingly; but I should indeed be grieved if I thought you were going to be miserable. You are fond of Margaret, and she will do all in her power to make you happy and comfortable."

"I won't live with Margaret," said Ethel, passionately, "I don't like her; I shall hate her, because if it were not for her you would take me with you!"

"Be reasonable, dear Ethel. Since I cannot have you with me, I feel sure that you will be more at home with Margaret than with any one else. You have been used to her from a baby, and she loves you very much."

"How long shall you be away, mamma?" asked Ethel, struggling for self-control.

"Some months, dear, perhaps six." She dared not tell her that it *might* be nine or even twelve months before they returned.

"Six months; oh, mamma, how dreadful! What ever shall I do till you come back?"

"Be as happy as you can, dear; and get well and strong. What do you imagine papa intends giving you before we go away?"

"I do not know, mamma," said Ethel, in a tone of eager inquiry. A forthcoming present always arouses one's curiosity.

"A little grey pony, Ethel, so that you may have long rides all round the neighbourhood."

Ethel's cheeks flushed with pleasure.

"A pony of my own! that will be nice!" she exclaimed.

But in another minute the remembrance of the condition on which the pony was to be hers came to her mind, and hiding her face on her mother's shoulder, she said in a broken voice, "Mamma, it would be ever so much nicer *not* to have the pony and to keep you!"

Ethel cried as she thought of the parting, and Mrs. Raymond did not check her. Nay, I think that a few drops fell from her own eyes as she pressed Ethel fondly to her bosom, and wished more earnestly even than her child that they could remain together. She was aware, however, that this was not practicable under present circumstances, and she strove to forget her own grief in trying to disperse that of her little daughter. Nor was it long before she succeeded; for tears and smiles with most children lie very close together, and Ethel was easily beguiled into talking with some interest about the arrangements which her mamma had made with Margaret during her absence from home, and also about the pony.

## Chapter VIII.—Aline and Ralph.

Long before Ethel was up that morning the little gipsy girl had slipped noiselessly out of the tent where she slept, and had crept away to the woods to gather the wild flowers that she had promised the young lady.

Late on the previous evening, for some reasons with which she was not acquainted, it had been suddenly resolved by those in authority that a move should be made in an easterly direction. Aline, without saying anything of her intention, determined to get up as soon as it was light, that she might find some flowers, and might have time to run up to the farm and to leave them there for the young lady. It was really *a run* to the farm, for the gipsy girl was very swift-footed, and she was so afraid of not accomplishing her object that she put on more speed than usual, and was quite exhausted when she reached the house.

The hot cup of coffee and thick slice of bread and bacon, given by Margaret, soon revived her; and finding it was earlier than she expected, she returned more leisurely. She was glad she had been able to fulfil her promise to Miss Raymond. Ethel had won the heart of the little gipsy girl by one or two kind words and a touch of sympathy; and she was sorry to be obliged to leave the neighbourhood without seeing her again or bidding her good-bye. How easy it often is to influence others for good! We should be more on the look-out for opportunities.

Aline was walking along, thinking of Ethel, when, on nearing the top of the hill, from which there was a view of the different roads branching off from it, a boy, evidently one of her own party, turned to meet her, saying,—

"Where in the world have you been, Aline? We could not tell what ever had become of you."

"I got up to see the sun rise, Ralph; it was just splendid!"

He shook his head at that speech.

"Why do you steal off without saying where you're a-going to?"

"Cause I don't want folks to know, to be sure."

"But we've got to march directly, Aline, and you might have been left behind."

"Shouldn't have cared if I had! I likes this part of the country."

"You'd pretty soon have been starved."

"That's likely, ain't it? when I've got a tongue to beg with and hands to work with," she answered, with a saucy toss of her head.

"Work! as if you could work!" he repeated disdainfully.

"Wait, and you'll see some day," she answered. "But I got my breakfast this morning without either working or begging."

Of course Ralph wanted to know how, and of course Aline was ready to tell him.

Ralph was her particular friend and confidant;

he always took her part, and defended her from any rough usage, and she, in return, poured all her secrets into his ear, and mended his clothes for him. She had not seen him since her meeting with Ethel, and now she told him all about it; and she described Ethel in such glowing terms as might have made that little girl vain had she heard her. And then Aline said that she had promised the young lady a bunch of flowers at eleven o'clock that morning, not supposing that she should be hindered doing so; and therefore, in order that Miss Ethel might not be disappointed, she had got up at daybreak to pick some fine ones, and to carry them to the farm in readiness for her.

Ralph was satisfied with the explanation, and as interested as a boy could be in such a tame affair as flower-gathering. When she had finished, he said a little reproachfully,—

"If you had asked me, Aline, I would have got them, and have taken them to the farm for you; and then you need not have tired yourself."

"Tired! I'm not a bit tired; I'm as fresh as a lark;" and Aline danced on a few yards in advance of him in proof of her assertion. Then, standing still till he came up to her, she grew very grave, and said, "Ralph, we are not Christians, are we?"

He looked surprised. "What ever has put that into your head, Aline?"

"Never mind, just answer my question."

"Well, no, we are not Christians; we don't want to be."

"Could we if we did want?"

"I'm sure I don't know, it might be possible."

"What is a Christian?"

"I can't tell you exactly; it's something to do with Christ."

"And who is Christ?"

"He was a very good sort of man, I believe; they talks about Him in them large buildings that they calls churches."

"Miss Ethel said that she went to church when she was a baby, and that they gave her her name there. Where did we get our names Ralph?"

"Mother gave me mine."

"And you did not go to church?"

"No, I should think not. What use would such rubbish be to us?"

"As much use as it is to other folks," retorted Aline.

"Other folks is different; they're rich, and we are poor; they shuts themselves up in houses, and we lead a free life; what suits one doesn't suit t'other."

"I'll go into a church when we're in a town again, and learn something about these things," said Aline.

"Don't you be foolish, Aline. Why can't you be contented like other girls; you are always running after something fresh."

"Can't help it, Ralph; it's my nature, I suppose. *A sparrow don't settle down in a farmyard as a hen does, you know.*"

They had reached the encampment now, where there was every sign of a speedy departure. A lean-looking dog, whom Rover would never have condescended to put on his visiting list, bounded forward at the sound of Aline's voice, and welcomed her with boisterous expressions of delight. The greeting of Aline's aunt was for less amiable.

"What a plague you are, Aline, running off like that! You wanted to be out of the bustle, I expect, you idle little thing; you don't deserve to have a morsel to eat."

"Don't want it, so that suits;" was the rudely uttered reply; "I've had my grub already, and earned it, too, which is more than you've done, I guess!"

"Hush! be quiet, can't you?" said Ralph, giving her a little push aside that he might save her from a hasty cuff from her aunt.

But Aline, nothing daunted, sprang forward, and began at once packing some odd pieces of crockery into a basket.

"I'll do them in a twinkling, aunt; don't you bother about them," she said, in the most good-humoured of tones; and the aunt, who knew that Aline could work when she had a will, quietly turned away to some more pressing duty.

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## Chapter IX.—The Separation.

It may perhaps appear strange to our readers that Mrs. Raymond, in the prospect of leaving England, had not endeavoured to place her child with some relative of her own. But the fact was, Mrs. Raymond, herself an only child, only knew of two cousins belonging to her family; one of these was a soldier in India, and the other was the captain of a large vessel. So there was no help to be had from either of those quarters. Mr. Raymond had three or four brothers and sisters; but except with the youngest of them, aunt Dorothy, there were hindrances to their offering a home to Ethel.

Aunt Dorothy was a single lady, living in very good style; and had she been strongly urged would probably not have liked to refuse the care of her brother's child. But she was very formal and precise in her ways, and totally unaccustomed to children; and it cannot with truthfulness be said that she was either patient or sweet-tempered. It will not therefore be wondered at that Mrs. Raymond was disinclined to entrust Ethel to her aunt for several months.

The Raymonds had many friends in the neighbourhood and elsewhere, but none who could undertake the charge of the child; although they promised to look after her as much as they could. And her mother felt that, with this assistance, and oversight, she could leave her with Margaret, and her husband. She was sure that her health would be as carefully watched over as if she herself were present; and Miss Cleveland, the clergyman's sister, and an old schoolfellow of Mrs. Ray-

mond's, had kindly offered to give Ethel music and other lessons as might be convenient to them both. She would willingly have had Ethel at the rectory, but her brother was somewhat of an invalid, and objected to having a child always in the house.

So it was settled that, while her parents were away from England, Ethel was to stay at the farm; and when she had recovered a little from her first dismay at the prospect of their going she did not at all dislike the idea of her new home. For, as her mother had said, she was very fond of Margaret and she also thoroughly enjoyed the freshness and freedom of farmhouse life.

Still, the parting was on both sides a hard one. And it came sooner than Ethel expected. Mr. Crayshaw, the gentleman who called on Mr. Raymond, came on purpose to give some directions, gained from his own experience, about travelling abroad; and as Mr. Raymond was only waiting for this information before he started, the day quickly arrived when the last good-bye had to be said.

Ethel never forgot that morning. She was a brave little girl, and she would not add to her mother's distress by giving way to her own sorrow; but her pale cheeks, and the dark rim under her eyes, showed how keenly she felt the separation.

"God bless you, my dear, dear child, and keep you safe till we come back to you," said her mother, kissing her over and over again.

"Good-bye, darling mamma. Write to me very often, and come back as soon as you can. Oh, mamma, what shall I do without you?"

It seemed almost impossible for mother and child to part, but however the time may be prolonged, the last moment *must* come, and Ethel presently saw the carriage drive off, and her parents waving their hands to her from it. It seemed as if she were in a dream.

But when the carriage was out of sight, and she turned from the door into the empty and desolate room, the stern reality forced itself upon her. All restraint was at an end, and throwing herself into Margaret's arms, she sobbed as if her heart would break. Poor little Ethel!

## LOST IN A CAVERN.

### In Two Parts.—Part First.

"This way, young gentlemen, if you please, you must follow the guide."

These were the words which had been repeated to us thrice during the short period of one minute after our entering the wonderful caves of N——, for the sake of exploring those curious subterranean passages, which look like nothing more nor less than gigantic tunnels, excavated by antediluvian monsters of the burrowing tribes, and the solution of whose origin, whether natural or artificial, is obscure and mysterious at the best. We had made up a large party to visit the caves, as they were considered quite the sight of our neighbourhood, and indeed attracted a great number of visitors from distant parts. It was said that they extended over at least four miles of ground, but owing to the loose nature of the soil of which the rock was composed, much of it was inaccessible, as large masses had from time to time fallen in and entirely blocked up the passages.

Strange stories were of course connected with the caves, and children were soothed to sleep by anecdotes of smugglers and hobgoblins, told them the last thing at night by considerate nursemaids, who marvelled much that their infant slumbers partook of the nature of nightmares and ghastly dreams.

But not alone to nursemaids and children was this superstition confined. The very guides themselves could tell horrible tales of how on this occasion they had been startled by direful noises, and on that beheld supernatural forms; and then they would appeal to one another to confirm what they had said, till the listener, bold and incredulous as he might appear, would find himself allowing the possibility of that which he had formerly looked upon only in the light of a foolish superstition.

Often and often had my brother John and I listened to them with bated breath, and now that we were actually to explore these eerie haunts of shade and spectre our excitement was excessive and not unpleasurable.

"I'm not a scrap afraid," said John, assuming a soldierly attitude as we entered the mouth of the cavern.

"I should think not," I replied, in an equally manly voice.

"I wish," he continued, "we needn't follow the guide; supposing we give him the slip, and go off on our own account."

"Don't you think it would be almost wiser——" I began; but seeing a sneer on John's face, I immediately agreed with him, and thought it would be much more fun to go alone. Consequently, our guide, who seemed suspicious of our intentions, kept continually remarking, "This way, this way, young gentlemen, if you please, you must follow the guide."

However courageous I might have felt at the cavern's mouth, it must be confessed that as we proceeded I heartily hoped that John would not find an opportunity of escaping from the guide. If he went, I must follow, or lose the reputation for courage and manliness so dear to a schoolboy. We were now standing in a large open space, lighted only by small candles placed at intervals in niches cut out in the soft stone. On every side were long gloomy tunnels, with here and there a spark of flickering light, which only served by contrast to make the darkness more intense.

Following our guide, we proceeded to penetrate this maze of tortuous windings. The earth seemed literally honeycombed with them, for no

sooner had we issued from one and found ourselves in a small cavern, than we were once more surrounded by similar openings.

I was standing listening to the guide, while he narrated to us marvellous legends of certain monks who were supposed formerly to have lived in the caves, and he was pointing out a rough carving cut by them in the rocky wall in years gone by, when I felt my sleeve pulled, and heard the unwelcome whisper from John, "Now's the time, follow me."

I hesitated a minute and pretended not to hear, but being reminded again of my brother's intention by a sharp pinch, I turned round, and was off like a shot, before the guide had detected my escape.

Down long passages and up others we ran, and never stopped till we were quite exhausted. The heat and excitement made me feel so brave, that, to show John the extent of my reckless daring, I deliberately blew out one of the small candles with which the caves were illuminated. He did not, however, seem to consider this exhibition of courage very praiseworthy, and rewarded my endeavours with the curt but comprehensive remark, "Neither clever nor funny."

Something in the tone in which he uttered these words caused me to turn suddenly round and look at him. He was standing in the middle of the low circular cavern which we had just entered, holding in his hand a small taper which he had taken from the wall. Looking steadfastly first at one opening and then at another, he at length said, in a voice of forced calmness, "Which way did we come?"

"It was one of these turnings, I know," I replied; but then as I looked from side to side I grew more and more puzzled, and at last was obliged to confess, "I really don't remember, they all look the same."

"I fancy it was this one," he said, stooping down to discover footmarks on the soft sandy floor.

"There are footmarks here as well," I said, perceiving that each opening had the appearance of having been recently trodden down.

"Well, we must choose one, and the sooner the better," he replied; and taking the precaution to secure one of the candles, he blew it out, as he said that "we might have it in reserve, in case of emergency."

It was not a comfortable thought that the words suggested, so I did not reply, and we both hurried down a long passage to our right, which for aught we knew might be taking us in exactly the opposite direction to that which we intended.

"How many turnings did we take?" I asked as we entered another small cavern.

"Three," was the reply, and John's voice was low and subdued this time.

We both paused as we again found ourselves in the same predicament as before. Five long, gloomy passages stretched away in every direction; which were we to choose? John looked at me, and I returned his look; they were both of blank dismay.

"We'd better shout," he said, and loud and clear rang our voices through the long aisles of the caves.

"They hear us, somebody answered," I suddenly exclaimed; but as I did so, the cruel deceptive echo caught up my words, and proved the hope to be a false one.

"John I don't like this at all," I cried at last; "shall we try another passage?"

"All right," was the hopeless rejoinder, and once more we began to make the best of our way through the tortuous windings of this nocturnal under-world.

As we proceeded, a cold damp seemed to pervade the atmosphere, it felt like going down into a well.

"I don't think this can be right," said John, for to the left and right of us ran two unilluminated passages, with nothing to relieve the intensity of their midnight darkness.

All the horrible tales that in daylight we had laughed at, now rushed to our remembrance, and clamoured for credence. We had actually arrived at the boundary of the illuminated caverns, and all beyond was dark and mysterious and unexplored. We turned our backs upon the darkness and hurried off in a new direction.

On, on we rushed, without stopping to question which was the right way.

It was of no use, we felt that we were hopelessly lost, and a mad and desperate desire to escape had seized us both.

"How often are the caves illuminated John?" I gasped, as we stood for a moment to gain breath.

"Only once a week," was the reply; "so unless we get out of this before the candles burn away, we may be prepared for a week's incarceration."

As John spoke I looked at the tapers, which by this time were more than half consumed. They would probably last half an hour longer, and then, when their friendly though flickering aid was withdrawn, our case would indeed appear desperate. As we stood John pulled out his watch and examined it in moody silence. I did not wish to know the time, as I feared it was getting late, and under the trying circumstances I felt that "ignorance was bliss." However, my brother, who seemed determined that my peace of mind should not exceed his own, at length muttered, "Half-past six," and added ominously, "No one is allowed to enter the cave after seven."

He had scarcely done speaking before we both simultaneously started at the sound of a distant whistle.

"All right, Charlie, they're looking for us this way," said John, seizing my arm and rushing down a turning. I struggled to release myself, as I was sure he had mistaken the direction of the sound and running to the mouth of another entrance stood for a minute to listen.

Again the sound! far off, indeed, but certainly in the direction I had at first imagined.

"There, John, I was right," I exclaimed, exultingly; but, alas! John was equally positive that I was wrong, so what was to be done? I could not give up the evidence of my own ears, for I felt that I should be throwing away the last hope of deliverance, and John felt the same, so we stood for a minute irresolute.

"We'd better each go our own way," he said at last, "but this time we must be sure to leave land-marks behind us, or we shall lose each other altogether. If we drop cuffs and ties here and there we shall easily find our way back."

I did not at all like the proposal, but there seemed no alternative if we wished to escape from our prison before night, so I said "All right," in a faltering voice, and prepared to start off on my own account. I saw that John was sorry for me, as he felt that he had led me into this diliemma; besides, being two years my senior, he had a right to indulge in a little patronizing sympathy.

"Be brave, old boy," he said kindly; "keep your eyes and ears open, and we shall be sure to hit upon someone before long."

So having agreed that if we did not meet with a deliverer within ten minutes from the time of our departure, we should both return to our starting-point, we parted company, each taking the turning which he thought to be the right one.

N. E. L.

## LIFE.

ROLLING onward, staying never,
Bearing on its bosom ever,
Countless multitudes!

Now through sunshine, bright and cheering,
Now, through storms, its wild way steering,
Rushes on life's stream!

First a tiny brooklet springing,
Then a river, broad and brimming,
Then, an ocean wide.

Oh! the many hopes and longings,
Oh, the many heart-sore throbbings!
Rising as it flows!

Fairy forms with light steps bounding,
Tones with life and joy are sounding
Ever and anon;

While against the mighty current,
Struggling vainly in the torrent,
Sinks full many a one.

And the stream with hot haste speeding,
Beareth onward, all unheeding,
Those that float below.

Down the river, broad and gleaming,
With its shoals and quicksands teeming,
Who will guide the way?

Ever 'mid the sunlight glowing,
'Mid the winds and tempests blowing,
Lo! a Form is seen!

Hands are stretched in eager longing,
Eyes are strained, for help imploring,
Surely, not in vain!

C. M. W.

## BURIED BIRDS.

1. Harold and I are going for a row; launch the boat immediately.
2. What a great tear! O Binny, you careless girl!
3. The frosts nip every tender plant in my garden.
4. That old pedlar knows every one in this neighbourhood.
5. I know *rendezvous* is French.
6. The crown was placed upon the victor's head.
7. The sea gleamed far and wide like burnished gold.
8. My little pet, rely upon me always for assistance.
9. Why are you so cross? Billy is doing nothing to tease you.
10. Are you reading about that old hobgoblin, Netta?
11. I am going across the field, farewell for the present.
12. Oh, what a crash! awkward boy, to let it fall!
13. Mary baked this nice cake in her old oven yesterday.
14. Bob is going to take a dip, perhaps Fred would like to go also.
15. Tyre was a great mart in ancient times.

ADELE M.

## DUTY AND TEMPTATION.

SOLUTION OF THE EIGHTY-FIFTH PICTURE STORY.

"MAKE haste there, Bill, mind you don't stop idling on the road!"

"Right, master," answered Bill, quickly, and he set off at a round pace.

Mr. Jones was the butcher of a country town, and William, or familiarly, Bill Green, was his errand-boy.

The latter was sent, on the day of which we are speaking, to a house some distance off, with a leg of mutton.

Bill had quite determined not to stop on the way, but, alas! temptation was too strong, and before he had proceeded far on his way a "Punch and Judy show" engaged his attention, and kept him idling for a good quarter of an hour.

Meanwhile the woman to whom the joint of meat was sent was impatiently stirring her blazing fire, and wondering why the meat did not arrive, imputing all the blame to "those tiresome boys."

Occasionally she went to the door, but nowhere was any sign of boy or meat visible. But Bill, as soon as the show was over, remembering how long he had idled, started off again in order to reach his destination; but soon another temptation presented itself, and it is well known that the second step in a downward path is far easier than the first.

An acquaintance met Bill, and notwithstanding the opposition of the latter, persuaded him (rather too easily, I am afraid) to have a game at marbles. But while engrossed in their play they did not observe a large dog, who stealing up looked suspiciously at the meat, which Bill had placed for a moment on the ground. The boys soon began to dispute about a trifling matter, and from arguing fell to quarrelling, little suspecting what was going on behind their backs.

Suddenly, however, Bill uttered a great exclamation, and took to his heels as fast as he could in pursuit of the dog, who had actually seized and was running away with the mutton.

In vain the boys ran, shouted, and threatened; for not many yards from them flowed a river, into which the dog plunged, still carrying the meat in his mouth.

In vain they threw stones at him, the other side of the stream was quickly reached, and the dog escaped with his prize. Bill was in a great rage, but anger could not restore the meat.

He could only slink away sheepishly to the place where the mutton ought to have been taken, and tell a discredited story.

The woman, Mr. Jones's customer, declared that Bill had stolen the meat for his own or his family's benefit, said she would tell his master of his conduct, and thus cause his dismissal; finally she vented her anger on Bill with the basting-ladle, giving him several sharp blows with that domestic utensil.

When Bill returned to Mr. Jones he was of course dismissed from the butcher's service; but the event was finally of benefit to him, by teaching him never to idle away his time, never to be allured by temptation, and especially never to steal the time of others.

FRANK LESLIE P. (16).

*Cotham, Bristol.*

## PICTURE STORY.

### No. LXXXVII.

HONOURABLE MENTION.—Katie A., Dahlia E. M., Bessie C. M'D., Kathleen S., Lucy E. A. B., Emily R. H., Marie A. M., Mary O. B., Alyce A. H. T., Mary G. C., Sara L. W., May C. M., Longueville and Tregelles, Jessie A. D., Emmeline and Nellie H., Sophie and Amélie le F., Edith C. B., Mabel S. M., Madeline M. S., Amy J. M., Edith S., Louisa B., Alice M., Harriet M. H., Florence D. S., Jenny H., Margaret H. de C., Jessie K., Mary Ann S. E., Helen M., Emma B., Isabel H. P., Sarah J. H., Florence and Dora C., Lillie, Edith E. W., Harriet A. C., Kate M. H., Amy C. L., Annie E. W., Edith R. P., Primrose, Rosa N. H., Catherine W. H. J., Sallie B., Ethel L. T., Nannie B., May E. T., Maude P., Margaret E. N., Ellen J. M., Mary H., Agnes E. D., Grace C. W., Philip le F., Richard H. H., Frederick H. F. W., Arthur H. B., Arthur T. V., Lynx, Sampson W. M., Gregor V. S. T., Cecil G. W. R.

An unusually large number of solutions were sent to us for the Eighty-fifth Story. Some nice ones, however, did not comply with the rules. Our friends must be particular in attending to these.

Thanks for a pretty pincushion. EDITOR.

[CLIMBING THE ROCKS.]

## AUNT MILLICENT'S CHARGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SOLDIER HAROLD," &C.

### CHAPTER VI.—ST. HILDA'S ISLE.

FOR the first week Arnold and Johnnie were allowed to do pretty much as they liked, and a great deal of pleasure they contrived to get out of the permission. Out of doors most of the day, the fresh air and exercise did them a large amount of good, and brought the bright roses into their cheeks. Little Hugh trotted about after them; but it had been Mr. Grey's express order that the two little children should not go down on the sands without some better protector than the boys; so that when Hugh was with them they had to be content with inland amusements: and though *there were plenty of these*, still the sea and the shore were the greatest attraction, for they were the greatest novelty.

They did not see much of their new acquaintances, the Gascoigne boys, during the week; but a grand excursion had been planned for Saturday, and they were all looking forward to it.

But Johnnie's pleasurable anticipations were mingled with a little fear, and he almost wished that he and Arnold might be left to themselves; almost, though not quite; for Arnold was constantly reminding him that they ought to be glad of the notice of such a fellow as Basil, one older than themselves, and in every way their superior.

"And we shall be glad enough of his help and countenance when we go to school, I can tell you, Johnnie."

"I don't want to go to school," exclaimed Johnnie; "and I thought you said papa was going to teach us?"

"Oh no. Papa has enough to do to look after the old woman that Agatha wanted to take in hand, and he can't be bothered with us."

"Poor Agatha!" said Johnnie, "I wish she was well enough to go about with us."

"I am not sure that I do; she would only be in the way. And Agatha's temper is none of the best, you know."

At length the longed-for Saturday dawned clear and bright, and intensely hot. Agatha said she wondered how they could think of stirring out on a day like that; but Arnold assured her that was because she was a girl; boys did not care for heat, or for anything else: besides it was always cool by the sea, so that she need not think they would come back melted.

But Arnold did not know any more than Agatha did whither they were going or what they were going to do.

However, about eleven o'clock, when Millicent was upstairs in the nursery, she heard Arnold's voice calling for her.

"Aunt Millicent! where are you? where is Aunt Millicent?"

And he burst into the nursery so boisterously that he almost ran over little Eva; but he caught her in his arms and swung her up to his shoulder, exclaiming as he did so,—

"Where in the world are you, auntie? I have been searching the house for you, and I am in an awful hurry. Basil has come, and he says we must take some lunch, as we shall not be back till late in the afternoon. They've got some; and cook won't give us any without you, tell her to."

"She hadn't need!" put in nurse; but Arnold went on without noticing the interruption,—

"And oh, aunt Millicent, they have got the loveliest things over their shoulders! knapsacks, they call them. I wish we had some!"

"I am afraid you will have to be content with an humble bag, Arnold. I will come and see what I can find to put into it. You must be going a long distance; but be careful, Arnold, not to go further than you think Johnnie can manage. Remember he is a little fellow, and cannot do so much as you can."

"All right, auntie," was the careless answer.

"And if you could bring back something pretty for Agatha. Poor child, it is rather hard for her not to be able to see all the places and things you are so constantly talking about."

"Oh, Agatha can wait till she can go herself. The shells won't run away, you know, auntie; at least, if they do, some more will come, and I don't think Agatha cares. I wish this little pet could go."

"I'll go anywhere with you," said tiny Eva, clutching at Arnold's hair to keep herself from falling.

At that moment there came a not very gentle reminder from below.

"Come along, Grey; are you going to keep us *here all day?*"

Eva set up a loud cry when Arnold put her down; so he took her in his arms again and carried her down stairs with him.

Nurse said Arnold spoilt the little one, and she was always sorry to see him come into the nursery. But perhaps Arnold remembered one of his mother's last requests—"Be a kind, loving brother to little Eva;"—and he was trying to fulfil it after his clumsy fashion.

Aunt Millicent had a good supply of provisions ready; Arnold took the bag and swung it over his shoulder, and the four boys started.

But by the time they had got out of the village, the bag was so heavy, and was so unpleasant to carry—so different from his companion's knapsacks—that he turned it over to Johnnie, and thought no more about it.

"Whither are we going?" Arnold asked.

"Ah," said Basil, "we have not told any one that. At least, only old Willcox, our coachman, knows where we generally go on a fine Saturday; he told us of it. Can you walk five miles?"

"Of course," answered Arnold contemptuously, "ten if you like!"

"It will be ten, there and back. And can you climb? because it's a stiffish climb where we are going, isn't it, Ernest?"

"Ay. Those who can't climb had best stay at home."

"I dare say we can manage that part of the business as well as you can."

"Come along, then. Step out, and we shall be there before long. But we must keep to the top of the cliffs at present."

"Oh, please let us go down on the sands," said Johnnie. "I want some pretty bits of seaweed for Agatha."

"You shall have lots of seaweed by and by," said Basil, "there are some beauties where we are going; and I can tell you the names of most of them."

The boys enjoyed their walk. Basil could tell them a great deal, all about the cliffs and the rocks, and the live things to be found on the shore; for he was fond of talking to the old coachman, who had lived at Rothwell all his life, and knew the sea and its belongings as well as he knew his horses.

"Shall we soon be there?" sighed little Johnnie at last. "I'm *so* tired!"

"Why, the little fellow has got that heavy bag all this time! How could you be so thoughtless, Arnold?—Here, Johnnie, give it me;—and, Ernest, you give him hold of your hand, and help him a bit; we shall soon be there now."

Arnold coloured and said he had quite forgotten; but Arnold liked to save himself trouble when he could.

The place of their destination was a small rocky island, about half a mile from the shore; at least it was an island, at high water, but when the tide was out, there was a rough, uneven, stony promontory by which it could be reached; and it

was here that the two Gascoigne boys sometimes spent their holiday afternoons; not nearly so often, however, as they had led their new friends to suppose, for it was rather a hazardous undertaking, and old Willcox had given them many cautions about it; and he always felt a little uneasy until they returned in safety.

"You are sure the tide will be out, Basil?" Ernest asked.

"Of course. Trust old Willcox for that; he told us it was safe enough; we shall be all right, only we must not stay longer than two hours."

These remarks were carried on in a low tone, but Johnnie heard them, and his face went white with fear.

"Oh, is there any danger? Oh, don't let us go on, Arnold! we shall all be drowned!"

"Nonsense, you little silly!" and Ernest, who had hold of his hand gave him a violent pull. "How can there be any danger?"

"Why, you asked if it was safe; I heard you."

"I didn't! so you see your ears can hear wrong sometimes."

But even Arnold looked a little blank when he saw the long rough place they had to go over, with white foaming waves dashing against it, and now and then splashing on to it; and the island in the distance looked so steep and rocky, it seemed impossible to reach it.

"Are you sure we can do it?" he asked.

"Oh yes; we have been lots of times; and the bit of difficulty is the chief fun, you know."

Poor Johnnie did not think so: he floundered about, and would have been down several times had not one of his companions held him up. Arnold had enough to do to take care of himself without looking after his little brother. But at length they reached the island in safety, with nothing more than a few scratches on their hands and a few cuts on their trousers knees.

St. Hilda's Isle, as Basil had christened it—for he had been reading *Marmion* lately—was little more than a mere rock; and at the farther side of it was a cleft which the boys called their cave.

"Now we are the monks of St. Hilda's Isle," said Basil, "and we are to make an expedition round the island to see if there is any one in distress that we can help."

But first they were to get their lunch before sallying forth from the cave, and very hungry they were with their walk, and as Basil gravely informed them that the chief business of the monks always was to eat, they set to work with eager appetite, and lightened bag and knapsacks considerably.

The time passed pleasantly in one amusement or another; but there were none of the pretty shells and seaweed that Johnnie had been promised; Basil said now that they would find them as they went back.

They were so busy with their play that they had no thought of how time was going on until all at once Ernest suddenly exclaimed,—

"I say, Basil, how goes the enemy? isn't it almost time we were going back?"

"We can't have been two hours, but we will go down and see."

The scramble down the rocks was worse than the scramble up had been. Arnold and Johnnie were not so sure footed as their companions, and they thought they would have gone head first over more than once. Basil was the first; and when he reached the last ledge of rock, he uttered an exclamation of alarm.

"We are almost too late! we shall have to make a rush for it. The waves are coming over this end."

Johnnie began to cry.

"Oh, I wish we were safe at home!"

"There's no danger, not a bit! it's all Basil's nonsense," said Ernest. "Only we must look sharp."

But the water was there, and they had to go through it a little way, and the longer they delayed the worse it would be. Johnnie stepped in, but the water was over his boots in a moment, and he could go no further; but stood there crying, with the waves lap lapping round him. The others, not noticing that he was not with them, had run forward, and were already on dry ground; and poor little Johnnie thought he was going to be left to be drowned.

"Oh, we must not leave him," said Arnold; "but we dare not attempt to go back. Come Johnnie, the longer you wait the worse it will be."

But Johnnie could do nothing but stand and cry, and the waves were rising.

Basil was about to go to the rescue; but Ernest stopped him.

"No," he said, "leave him to me."

"Now, Johnnie," he went on, "remember that this island—St. Hilda's Isle—is a secret; to the best of my knowledge no one knows of its existence but we four, and one other whom I need not name. Now, unless you promise faithfully never to divulge to any person or persons where we have been to-day and what we have been doing, I'll leave you where you are, and the sea will come over you, and you will be food for the fishes in no time."

"Don't Ernest! where is the use of frightening the little fellow so? You must fetch him; it will be dangerous soon, the waves are rising fast."

"And you will give him cold; oh, poor Johnnie," pleaded Arnold.

"Sea water never gave any one cold yet; he is all right. Promise, Johnnie."

Johnnie promised. He would have promised anything to get out of that cold, cold water.

Ernest was by his side in a moment.

"Now, remember, if I find you giving out so much as the ghost of a notion of an idea of our amusements to-day, I will bring you back to St. Hilda's Isle and leave you there, and no one will know what has become of you. That is what will

be done to little boys that tell tales. Do you understand, Johnnie?"

Yes, Johnnie understood; he was not likely to tell; his fright had been too great for that. He was very, very glad to be safe on the sand; but he trembled very much from cold and terror.

The five miles home again seemed very long to them all, and they were very glad when the little bay of Rothwell was reached at last.

"I thought for certain you were going to drive it too late this time, Master Basil. I have been real uneasy," was Willcox's greeting of the party when they came home.

Johnnie was almost over done; but he would not tell aunt Millicent whither they had been; only that they had walked a long way, and that they had been in the water.

Millicent wisely forbore many questions; she did not want to put too great a restraint upon her little nephews. But nurse, who had the clothes to brush and the trousers to mend, declared if that was the way they were to go on they would soon make an end of everything; if she were Miss Grey she would not let them go off the premises for the next week.

Fortunately for the boys, she was not Miss Grey.

But Johnnie had no wish ever to see St. Hilda's Isle again.

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## Chapter VII.—Ida Gascoigne.

THAT same Saturday afternoon Hugh and Eva were having a famous game of play with auntie in the drawing-room, and Agatha was watching them. The little ones had been out for a walk, and had brought in a lot of wild roses from the hedgerows; and Millicent had indulged them by allowing them to dress her hair with them; she was sitting on the floor, the wavy bands of her dark hair all unloosed and flowing round her, and the children were laughingly crowning her with the flowers which Agatha had made into a garland for them.

"Why, auntie," she said, "you look like the May Queen herself. You ought to sing, 'I'll be Queen of the May, mother!'"

What was it that brought a shadow over the brow and dimmed the bright smile for a minute? only a sudden remembrance, which Agatha's words had called up, of a time not so very long ago, when she, a little maiden, had been crowned on her tenth birthday by a wreath of far rarer and more costly flowers than those, by a loving mother's hand, and when she had repeated those very words. But she must not look back now; those merry children must not be sobered by any sorrow of hers.

So busy were they all, and so much noise were they making, that they did not hear the sound of wheels, nor see the pretty low pony carriage which drove up to the door, so that they were *considerably startled*, especially Millicent, when the drawing-room door opened, and a voice was heard exclaiming,—

"Oh, how very charming! Oh, Miss Grey, do keep still! you have no idea how pretty you look! I wish I could make a picture of you just as you are. For it is Miss Grey, I suppose?"

Millicent, colouring a little, rose from her low seat, and threw back her hair to shake hands with her visitor.

"The children have been amusing themselves at my expense," she said, with a bright smile.

"They have made you very pretty. I am Ida Gascoigne, and mamma said I might come this afternoon. I have been wanting her to bring me all the week, but she is not very strong, you know; or at least thinks she isn't, which amounts to the same thing; so I determined I would not wait any longer, but would come by myself. And is this Agatha?" with a very visible tender change in her voice.

Agatha, who had been staring with wide open eyes at the bright apparition which had so suddenly and unexpectedly burst in upon them, turned her head aside; and, both literally and figuratively set up her back, when she saw that Ida was approaching her sofa; for Agatha had a great dislike to being pitied, especially by strangers. So when Ida took her hand and said gently,—"I was so sorry when I heard you were ill; you must suffer very much."

Agatha drew it away rather roughly, and said shortly,—

"I am not ill; I am going to get well, quite well, very soon."

"Agatha is not always like this," said Millicent; "some times she can run about as well as any one, only just now her back is weak and painful; but we hope she will be really well and strong in time. But I must go and set to rights my disordered locks. Agatha dear, will you try to amuse Miss Gascoigne till I come back."

"Oh, don't go," said Ida, "you look so much nicer as you are."

But Millicent did not think so, and went.

Agatha was in no mood to make herself agreeable. She could be pleasant and kind when she liked; but if it did not suit her at the moment, no consideration of politeness and courtesy could make her so. So if Ida had to depend on her for amusement she would get but little.

But Hugh and Eva had overcome their shyness at the sight of a stranger; and Eva came and sat on her lap, and Hugh brought her books and pictures from the table; so by the time Millicent returned they had become very good friends, though Agatha had never spoken a word.

"I came," said Ida, with a hesitating glance at the sofa, "to ask Agatha if she would like a drive. I brought the low pony carriage on purpose.—Will you? I am sure it would do you good."

And again the bright face was bent over Agatha, with that same pitying expression that irritated her so much.

"No, thank you," she answered, stiffly, "I would rather not."

"Oh, do. I am sure you would like it. We could get you into the carriage quite easily; and there are some very pretty drives about Rothwell."

"I can wait to see them until my own feet can carry me," was Agatha's ungracious answer; and she flung herself round with her back to the company, and would not say another word.

Millicent was exceedingly sorry and distressed.

"Do not heed her, dear," she said in a low tone, as she drew Ida away to the other side of the room. "Agatha considers herself a privileged individual; but she is giving you a very bad specimen of herself this afternoon."

"I thought she would like it. It must be so dull, lying there always."

"Perhaps she is suffering a little more than usual just now; another day she may be different. It was very kind and thoughtful of you to come, dear."

"I wanted to see Agatha; but I wanted to see you more. I liked the look of your face so much on Sunday at church. Miss Grey, I want somebody to love me!"

"My dear child, I have no doubt you have plenty of people."

"No, I don't think so. There's mamma; of course she cares for me in a certain way, and has a sort of pride in me, and is vexed if I do anything out of the way, but I don't think she loves me much; I am sure she thinks more of her own ailments than she does of me. Wait, please, don't stop me!" for Millicent was about to speak; "let me say my say out, and then you may scold me if you like. Then there's papa; I am sure he thinks a great deal more of the boys than he does of me. And as for the boys themselves, to them I am only a girl—not worth much, for I can't play cricket, and run races, and climb rocks as they can. There! don't you think I have made out a good case?"

"And is that all, Ida? have you no sister?"

"Oh no! I once had, a dear little wee trot like your little Eva. Ah, if Lucy had lived, it would have been all right."

"And no governess?"

"Oh yes, there is Fräulein; dear, good, fat old creature; she is very kind, but she is no companion for me; and as to love, I should never think of loving Fraulein! Besides, she is away for holidays now. Miss Grey!" with a sudden change of manner, and throwing her arms round Millicent, "what must you think of me, talking in this wild way to you? but you don't seem a bit like a stranger."

"I hope I shall not be one long I think you and I shall come to like each other, Ida, if it does not even go beyond that."

"It has gone beyond already," said Ida with another squeeze of Miss Grey's hand.

"Why, I thought you were making yourself out such a very unlovable person; I thought nobody loved you."

"I don't think they do much."

"Then there must be some fault somewhere; and I should not very much wonder if it might not be found in you."

"I dare say it might."

"My dear child," Miss Grey went on, dropping the light tone she had used, and stroking the fair face that was turned up to hers so wistfully, "will you let me speak as plainly to you as I should do to Agatha?"

"Yes, that is just what I want. I want somebody to speak plainly to me."

"Well, then, if you want to be loved, the best and the only way is to love. Your mamma is not strong, you say; don't you think a little sympathy and kindness from you would go a long way towards helping her to bear her ill health? A loving little daughter would not say or imagine her ailments all fancies. And don't you think papa would appreciate any loving attentions you could render him? And your brothers—a little love, and kindly interest in their amusements, would soon soften them. It is the divine rule, dear Ida; 'We love Him because He first loved us;' 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us.' If we have that love deep down in our hearts, the human love will spring up and grow."

Ida did not answer, but she looked thoughtful; perhaps the conversation had taken a graver turn than she expected, and she was not sorry that the two little ones interrupted them at that moment.

They were tired of being unnoticed, and Agatha would have nothing to say to them.

"I must go now," said Ida, "but I may come again, may I not, Miss Grey?"

"Certainly, whenever you like. You and Agatha will be nice companions. You must be about her age, I think."

"I am fifteen."

"Just Agatha's age."

"A very old niece for you to have, Miss Grey," laughed Ida. "I shall begin to call you aunt Millicent the next time I come."

Hugh and Eva ran after Ida to the carriage, and Millicent followed to see her safely in.

A bright thought struck Ida as she was stepping in.

"Oh, Miss Grey, may I take these little pets home with me? I will bring them back very soon."

"I think not this time, dear; your mamma might not like it."

"Oh, that just reminds me; I had almost forgotten, and I should have got scolded for my carelessness if I had. Mamma sent her kind regards, and she hopes you will not wait for her to call, as she is not able; but she will be glad to see you any time."

Millicent sent some suitable message back; but Ida had put on such an exceedingly proper look,

that she did not quite know whether she was making fun or not.

The little ones were clamorous to go with Ida, if auntie would only let them; so auntie gave way so far as to allow them to go for a little drive, if Ida would bring them back in half an hour.

Miss Grey returned to the drawing-room. A low half-smothered sob came from the sofa; but Millicent took no notice until Agatha turned and flung her arms around her.

"Auntie, dear, I am very sorry. I have been in a wretched temper."

"Yes, Agatha; you have indeed cause for sorrow. You have been very rude to your guest, a stranger. When Ida Gascoigne comes again you must tell her you are sorry."

"But I am not sorry to her, only to you, auntie, because I knew you were grieved. But, Ida, why need she come here pitying me? I hate to be pitied! and I shall be as well as she is soon."

"I hope you will, Agatha, if it please God to make you so."

"I think she wanted to show how much better off she is than we are—parading her carriage and her ponies."

"Oh, Agatha, put away such thoughts out of your mind, they are unworthy of you and of Ida. I am sure she had no such idea; she came out of pure thoughtful kindness. Ida and I have been talking of love; we all need more of it; the love that thinketh no evil. Oh, Agatha, dear child, if you would but strive after more patience and more love, you would be far, far happier!"

## THE HOME ABOVE.

O JERUSALEM, my city,
The shining and the fair!
My spirit longeth earnestly
To rest for ever there!
There, toil and labour over,
All sorrow fled away,
The night has gone for ever,
'Tis always brightest day!

I'm often here so weary,
And stony is the road;
But in that heavenly city
I'll bear no more my load.
O Jesu, precious Saviour,
Give me a clearer eye,
To see beyond the shadows
To where my home doth lie.

I love to tell Thy sweetness
While even here below,
The mention of Thy loveliness
Doth make my tears to flow;
But, Jesu, when I see Thee
Within that city fair,
I'll never, never weary
To sing about Thee there.

I know that round Thee gather
A glorious company,
In robes of snowy whiteness
Praising unceasingly;
And some on earth who knew me,
I know are in that throng:
I would that I were with them,
Singing that triumph-song!

O precious golden city,
Wherein my King doth dwell;
Of Thy all-dazzling beauty
No mortal tongue can tell.
I long for angel pinions
To bear me up above,
Beyond this strife and warfare,
Where every tone is love.

Jesu, my loving Saviour,
O give me day by day
Sweet glimpses of that city
To cheer my earthly way;
And when Thy voice shall bid me
Arise and come to Thee,
I'll come with joyful swiftness,
And with Thee ever be.

M.

## TOO PROUD TO TAKE ADVICE.

A BOY took his uncle down to the wharf to see a new ship that lay there. His uncle was an old shipmaster, and Harry was at some pains to show him round, partly perhaps to show his own knowledge. There was only one sailor on board, and as the visitors passed and repassed the hatches, "Mind ye, mind ye," he said; "don't fall into the hold, or ye'd never see daylight again."

"There is no danger of my uncle's doing so," said Harry, proudly; "he knows a ship from stem to stern; and *I* do too."

As they came down the ladder and walked away, "I was so provoked with that old salt," said he; "he seemed to think we were know-nothing landsmen, with not sense enough to keep from pitching into the danger. I wonder you should thank him for his advice, uncle. *I* was provoked."

"I should be very sorry to take offence at well meant advice," said the uncle. "Did you ever read about the *Royal George*, Harry?"

"You mean that big ship, which foundered one pleasant day in the harbour, and all on board perished. I know something about it; but tell me more, uncle. How did it happen?"

"It was at Spithead, where the British fleet were to anchor. The *Royal George* was the flag-ship, and Admiral Kempenfelt's blue flag floated from the mizen. She was a fine ship of a hundred guns. She was about ready for sea, when the first lieutenant discovered that the watercock was out of order. It was not thought necessary to

haul her in dock for repairs, but keel over until the damaged part was above water, and repair her there. Keeling a ship, you know, is making her lean over one side. A gang of men were sent from the Falmouth dockyard to help the ship's carpenters. The larboard guns were run out as far as possible, and the starboard guns run in amidships, which made the ship keel to larboard, so that her starboard side was far up out of water. The workmen had got at the mouth of the water-pipe when a lighter, laden with rum, came alongside, and all hands were piped to clear her. Now the port-sills of the larboard side were nearly even with the water before the lighter came alongside, and when the men went down to take in her casks, the ship keeled more than ever; besides, the sea had grown rougher since morning, washing the water into the lower-deck ports.

"The carpenter saw there was danger. He ran to the second lieutenant, who was officer of the watch, and told him the ship must be righted. The lieutenant, angry that the carpenter should dare dictate to him, ordered him back to his work. Growing every instant more convinced of the imminent peril of the ship, the man went a second time to the officer, warning him that all would be lost if the vessel was not righted instantly; but he only got a volley of oaths for his pains. The lieutenant, however, at last ordered the drummer to beat to quarters; but before the drummer had time to lay hold of his drum, the ship keeled over a little and a little more, and the men began to scramble down the hatchways to put the heavy guns back into their proper places. Alas, it was too late. Men may begin their duty too late. Already the water was rushing in; she filled rapidly, settled fast, and almost before help or rescue could be thought of, down went the *Royal George*, carrying her admiral, officers, men, and strangers on board, to the number of a thousand souls, down, down to a watery grave, so awfully sudden, that a few only in the upper deck could save themselves. And thus to perish on a fair day, in sight of land, surrounded by a fleet of ships, all aggravated the terrible disaster. As the poet has it:—

"'It was not in the battle:
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak:
She ran upon no rock.'"

"Awful," said Harry, shuddering; "and to have it owing to the pride of that foolish lieutenant. Too proud to take the carpenter's advice; that was the worst of all. I suppose you told it to me on that account. I thank you, uncle. Oh, that poor lieutenant. His own life and the lives of a thousand others, staked upon his feeling proud. I am sure it makes the Bible account of pride awfully true: 'Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall!'"

## THE GOOD SOLDIER.

ROBERT FLOCKHART was born near Glasgow, in 1777. Early in life he enlisted, and was sent to India, where he shared in many battles and hardships. He once passed through Delhi in pursuit of Holkar, a rebel chief, who, after being chased for fifteen hundred miles, surrendered himself to the British. During the first years of his life in India, he was notorious among his comrades for all kinds of wickedness; but the Lord had His eye of love on the poor blaspheming soldier, and he was yet to become a new man.

In 1810, at Berampore, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, pierced the heart of the poor blaspheming soldier. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shone into his heart, to give the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ. He became a new creature, and all the activity and energy to which he had been trained as a soldier he now showed in his love and zeal as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. While yet in India, in the Isle of France, and in Ireland, he held meetings, and preached wherever he could to his fellow-soldiers the faith he once had destroyed.

While in Edinburgh Castle, he was twice confined in the black-hole for perissting in preaching; but, nothing daunted, he used to preach through the bars of his prison to his fellow-men. In 1817 he obtained his discharge from the army, and from that year to the time of his death he resided in Edinburgh. In Bruntsfield Links, in front of the theatre, and most of all in Parliament Square, night after night, Sundays and workdays, wet or dry, Robert was to be found mounted on his chair at the corner of St. Giles' Church, preaching salvation through sovereign grace, by the blood of Christ. In the course of that period he was eighteen times put in prison for preaching, but it never once daunted his energy or zeal. Often he was made the song of the drunkard, and laugh of the scorner; but, with his Bible in his hand, he was ever ready with an answer from the Word. And we have seen the poor outcasts of the High Street melted to tears while they listened to the winning words of the old soldier, telling of Him who "receiveth sinners."

But the old frame was to wear out at last. Palsy laid him low, and for many months he was confined to his bed. Another stroke came a few days before he died. We saw him the evening of his last Sabbath on earth. He lay as if with a light on his old familiar face, breathing glory to God, and goodwill to the little band of men, most of them fruits of his unwearied ministry, who had met to sing and pray at his dying bed. Early on Tuesday morning, 8th September, he fell asleep.

A great multitude followed him to his burial. The recruiting parties of Edinburgh at the time, at their own request, carried him to his long home in Grange Cemetery. On the top of the coffin lay,

not the sword of war, but his old Bible, with which Robert, since he began his better warfare, for nearly fifty years, had fought the battles of his Lord. And a great multitude of citizens, old and young, who knew him and esteemed him highly in love for his work's sake, followed after; and many women, and between two and three hundred children—many of whom used to cluster round him when he preached, and to whom he had always a word of kindness and counsel when he met them, for which he generally made way by some *sweeties* gently slipped into their hands; and the weeping eyes along the line of the streets by which the funeral passed showed how many true mourners and children in Christ the dear old saint had left behind him.

Reader, learn from all this what a reality conversion is. What a change, from the drunken, blaspheming soldier, amid the toil and blood of Indian warfare; Robert had some peculiarities, at which some laughed, and others scoffed; but the great peculiarity was the self-denying, never-tiring faithfulness with which, counting himself not his own, but bought with a price, he sought to the last to glorify God in his body and in his spirit, which were God's.

## LITTLE STRINGS.

YOU may have amused yourself with a face made of gutta-percha; pinching it one way, and pulling it another, and remarking what different expressions it will assume. When you left off pulling it, it returned to the same face it was before.

Now your faces are softer than gutta-percha, and they are full of little strings called muscles; and these muscles pull them one way or another, just according to your feelings. You feel sad; the little muscles pull your face into a doleful expression. We can tell, by looking at you, how you feel. Or you feel merry; then these muscles pull your face into smiles and dimples.

But often there are wicked passions at work at the strings. Anger pulls, and oh, what a disagreeable look the face puts on in a minute. Pride pulls the strings, or vanity, or discontent, or deceit, and each brings its own expression over the face.

The worst of it is, that when these passions pull very often, the face does not return to what it was before, but the muscles harden and retain that ugly expression. By indulging in evil passions people may work their faces up into such awful faces, that sometimes when you meet a man in the street you can tell, just by looking at his face, what his character is.

A face that was very lovely when it was that of a child, has had the passion of anger pulling at it *so often that it always wears* a sullen, cross, dissatisfied look. Or if a man has learned to love to hoard up money for its own sake, his face gets a mean, grasping look, and we say when we pass him, "There goes a miser." Or if he has learned to lie and steal, he cannot make his face that of a truthful, honest man.

Now, dear readers, do you want to have pleasant faces, that every one will love to look at? *Then don't let the ugly passions get hold of the strings.* Put them into the hands of love and charity and goodwill and truth and honesty, and then they will be beautiful faces.

I have seen faces without a single handsome feature, that were sweeter to look at than the most perfect features that were ever formed. And why? It was the *expression.* And what makes the expression? Oh, it all depends upon whether the bad passions or the lovely graces get hold of the *little strings.*

## MULTA IN PARVO.

MUCH amusement may be found by taking one or two words and trying how many words can be formed of the letters composing them. For instance, from the word "grandmother" more than three hundred words can be made. *Every word* in the accompanying lines is contained in it:—

And Rhoda rode on the road to Rome,
  And Tom on a red-roan mare;
He had a dog and he had a net.
  And Rhoda had a hare.

And near them, on another road,
  A ranger rode, an armèd man;
To them he rode, he raged, he roared,
  He tore the net, to Tom he ran.

And Rhoda ran to a manger near—
  The ranger had the hare—
Nor rage nor danger tamed the dog,
  Nor Tom, nor the red-roan mare.

S. R.

## EDITORIAL NOTICES.

We shall be glad to send as many CANVASSING BILLS to our dear friends as they can undertake to give away. Also specimen numbers.

It is a good plan to order a READING CASE, price 6d. (through any bookseller). This case contains strings, so as to keep the numbers together, almost as if they were bound, and preserve them clean for binding at the end of the year.

Do not forget GOLDEN HOURS. It is only 6d. monthly. The Stories this year are "Money or Life," by G. Holden Pike, and "Cousin Deborah's Whim," by Mary E. Shipley; besides many other interesting papers.

Letters for the Editor, and Books for Review, must be addressed to the Rev. Dr. WHITTEMORE, 24, Paternoster Row, London. If anonymous, they cannot be noticed. When replies are needful a stamp should be enclosed.

# SUNSHINE.

EDITED BY W. M. WHITTEMORE, D.D., RECTOR OF ST. KATHERINE CREE, LONDON.

No. 172. APRIL, 1876. [ONE PENNY.

[ETHEL'S NEW FRIEND.]

## LITTLE ALINE.

### A STORY OF GIPSY LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PET'S DIFFICULTIES."

### CHAPTER X.—LITTLE FAITH'S SORROW.

FAITH FOSTER was sitting at a little round table, with her breakfast untouched before her. She was not even looking at it, for her eyes were too full of tears to see anything just then. Yes, she was crying; quietly, it is true, for Faith did most things quietly; but hers was, nevertheless, real heart-sorrow, and it was not easy for her to check its overflow.

Poor girl, you would pity her, I think, if you knew all her little history; and yet she had much—very much to be thankful for, as she herself would have been one of the readiest to acknowledge.

But there are times in one's life when everything looks so dark about us that for a little while it seems as if there were no blue in the sky, no sun-

shine in the world. And it was just such a time at that moment in Faith's life.

A little more than a week ago, Faith had lost the greatest earthly blessing which a child can lose. She had lost her mother—her good, kind mother, who had always cared for her, and from whom she had never been parted for more than a day in her life. And now she would never again see her mother in this world, never again feel the soft touch of her helping hand, never again hear the gladsome tones of her loving voice.

Her mother, when Faith could first remember her, was an active, healthy woman, working early and late for the support of herself and her children; and working not only with diligence, but with cheerfulness. She was not one who grumbled over her daily toil, nor yet one who drooped under it; she had plenty of strength and good spirits, and was naturally inclined to look on the bright side of things. She had her troubles, but somehow they seemed to sit lightly upon her, and she could throw off little annoyances as easily as some folks could brood over them.

Mrs. Foster's husband died when Faith was a baby, and when her little boy could scarcely run alone; and she had loved her husband as fondly as she had loved her children; but as soon as she had followed him to his last resting-place, she bestirred herself to obtain the employment that would best repay her for the exertions that she was willing to put forth.

Some of her neighbours set her down as a person without much feeling, because she did not sit with folded hands, fretting over her trials, and waiting for other people to help her, but Mrs. Foster said that she thought the highest respect she could pay to her husband's memory was to do her utmost to provide for his children, and to clear off the debts which his long and expensive illness had obliged her to incur.

She was a sensible, matter-of-fact woman, certainly; but you would not have deemed her wanting in affection if you had seen the unwearied tenderness with which for four years she nursed her sickly little boy, who had inherited his father's complaint, and who was at length laid beside him in the same grave, or if you had observed her gentle and wise training of the lame little daughter now left behind her, and left alone in the world.

Then Faith was lame? Yes, lame from her infancy. But only slightly so: her lameness scarcely showed, and it did not make her entirely dependent upon others. Still it was sufficient to hinder her from sharing in much of the bustle around her, and it was the cause of being delicate, and often ailing. She had, therefore, needed, even more than children usually do, a mother's care; and for the same reason she was likely to feel more keenly a mother's loss. For who would shield her from the roughnesses of life, and sympathize with her under the peculiar trials which her affliction necessarily brought with it now that her mother was taken from her?

And Faith had never thought of being separated from her mother. I do not mean that such an idea had never crossed her mind, but she had not seriously entertained it as being among the things that might happen to her; it seemed an event lying so far in the distance that it had never given Faith any real concern. For although during the last few years Mrs. Foster had changed from a strong, healthy woman, into a weak and ailing one, yet the change had come on so gradually, and she was always so bright and cheerful, and so ready to make the best of her complaints, that whenever she happened to be a little worse than usual Faith took it as a matter of course that she would be better again in a few days.

And then Faith, though never really ill, being herself naturally delicate, thought less of her mother's failing strength than she would otherwise have done. Besides, as persons grew older they of course grew weaker, and less able to exert themselves. Thus she had hardly realized her mother's danger before she was taken from her. Others were prepared for the end, were expecting it; but to Faith the bereavement seemed sudden, and that deepened her grief. Had she only known that her mother was going, she might have said so much to her that must now be for ever unsaid!

Losing her mother was indeed a great loss to Faith. For she was of a timid, gentle disposition, and shrank from going amongst strangers,—not at all fitted for making her way in the world, some of the neighbours said; and others remarked that it seemed almost a pity she had been suffered to outlive her mother. But persons make a great mistake when they talk in that way; because whatever God does is always the very best thing that can possibly be done; and although we often cannot see this—that is, cannot understand it, we ought simply to trust in His wisdom and goodness, believing that whatever seems mysterious to us now He will make quite plain by and by.

But this is not an easy lesson, and it is sometimes a long while before we learn it. Do you think, dear reader, that you have learned it?

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## Chapter XI.—Mrs. Simpson's Sympathy.

The door of the little sitting-room opened, and in came a short, bustling woman, the mistress of the house and a good friend to Faith. She had a small plate in her hand, covered with one still smaller, which she took off, disclosing a slice of nicely broiled bacon. She placed it before Faith, saying,—

"I've brought you a little bit of bacon, dear, to tempt you to eat, for I guessed you would not have much appetite to-day."

"Thank you, Mrs. Simpson," said Faith, hastily dashing away her tears, "but my head aches so this morning that I really cannot eat anything."

"And your head is likely to ache if you go without food," said Mrs. Simpson, in her quick but kind manner. "Now just begin, Faith, without thinking any more about it, and you won't find it half such hard work as you fancy it is."

She reached a knife and fork, and cut a piece of bread for Faith with a business-like air, which seemed to take for granted that Faith would set to work immediately, and Faith mechanically obeyed her.

"Why, your tea is quite cold, child," continued Mrs. Simpson; "I will throw this away, and pour you out a fresh cup; there's nothing like a cup of tea for the headache. I remember once when my head was dreadful bad that my husband's sister came in, and says she, 'Have you tried some good strong tea, Mary?' And when I said No, I hadn't, 'Bless me,' she says, 'it's the best thing in the world for a headache like yours.' Where's the teapot?"

And Mrs. Simpson went on to give Faith a full account of the wonderful cure which followed; and though such talk was not remarkably interesting, Faith listened to it, partly out of politeness, and partly because she was weary of her own thoughts; and while listening she so far forgot her troubles as to eat her breakfast, and to feel all the better for it.

"Now I'll clear the things, Faith, and then you shall lie down and try to get a little sleep; by and by I'll come in again and help you to pack up all that you are to carry with you, for there won't be no time, I reckon, to do much to-morrow morning."

"No, we shall have to set off by five o'clock; the train goes at six, uncle says." And the mention of the train brought the tears back again into Faith's eyes.

"Don't fret, my dear," said Mrs. Simpson, laying her hand kindly on the girl's shoulder, "its my belief that you'll be a deal happier in your new home than you expect, for your uncle seems a very respectable man, and if your aunt is at all like him you'll get on very well with them."

"I have never even seen her," said Faith.

"So much the better, because now you can't have any prejudices against her."

"But perhaps she will not like *me*," said Faith; "I'm lame, you know, and awkward, and I have not been used to a bustle."

"You are very handy, my dear, at most things; and as to the bustle, you won't mind that after a bit; and, indeed, it will do you good, Faith, for you want freshening up a little."

"I would much rather stay here with you."

"I wish you could, Faith, but as that is not possible, it is of no use even to think of it. I always find it is the wisest way just to look at things as they really are, and then make the best of them."

Very good advice, and perhaps it was easy for a strong-minded woman like Mrs. Simpson to act upon it, but a timid, delicate girl like Faith did not gather much comfort from it. Yet there was so much hearty kindness in Mrs. Simpson's manner, that her brisk matter-of-fact observations were really helpful to Faith, and she felt more hopeful during the remainder of the day.

Faith liked her uncle Philip, he was always kind to her mother and herself; but she had never seen her aunt, and, to tell the truth, she was a little afraid of her. For Philip, as was natural, whenever he spoke of his wife, praised her so highly for her clever management, and her quick, industrious habits, that Faith, I hardly know why, pictured her aunt as one of those sharp, driving women, who are never restful themselves, nor allow any one about them to be at peace. And although Margaret had sent most kind messages to Faith, telling her that she would do all in her power to make her new home comfortable to her, yet Faith could not be sure that her aunt did not secretly dislike having a girl under her roof—one of her husband's relatives, too, not her own—who would be of so little use to her. For Faith had but a poor opinion of herself; and she forgot that if God, in His providence, puts us in a fresh place, it is because He has some work for us to do there.

Still, in the midst of her fears and apprehensions Faith could really trust in Him as her Father and her Friend. She loved Him and tried to do what He told her; and though she knew that she was a poor weak child, and that her best services were full of imperfection, yet she believed that, for the sake of the Lord Jesus, He had forgiven her all her sins, and would guide her safely through all the dangers and difficulties of life. Oh, what a relief it was, under her present heavy troubles, to feel that there was One who would never leave her, but would always watch over her, and bless her!

## Chapter XII.—Life at the Farm.

Ethel's grief at parting with her mamma soon wore off. I do not mean that she quite lost it, for there were times when some slight circumstance would make it burst forth afresh, and she would be almost inconsolable. But she was reconciled to the change, and seemed so happy and cheerful, that Philip called her the little Sunbeam.

And certainly she had all that she could have, while her parents were away, to make her happy. Being the only child on the farm, every one about her did his best to gratify all her wishes and fancies. Margaret petted her as if she were a little stray lamb that must be tenderly cared for; and Philip was always ready to amuse her in his spare moments. He often took her out on her pony when he rode round the farm, or into the village, on his old horse Spot; or if he was not riding himself, he would walk by her side, teaching her how to manage her pony, and guiding it through shady lanes and along country roads, where Ethel had never walked, because of the distance.

Sometimes Margaret would give them a packet of tea, or a seed-cake, or a loaf of bread, for one or other of her poor pensioners who lived too far off to come to the house; and it always pleased Ethel to be entrusted with such errands, for she was fond of going into the queer little cottages and delivering Margaret's gifts and messages to the old women. Her bright face and lively ways, as well as the good things she carried, made her very welcome at the cottages; and, as Philip said, the old folks had so little sunshine in their lives, that it was worth while trying to put a ray into them now and then.

And when Margaret's work was done, she and Ethel had many a pleasant ramble together through the quiet paths in the woods, where the loveliest wild flowers grew, where the birds' nests could be seen in the thick-leaved trees, and the little rabbits darted in and out at their play. Wild strawberries at one season, and blackberries and hazel nuts at another, Ethel gathered and carried home.

The days were long at the farm, but not a bit too long for all that Ethel had to get through. Margaret was never up later than five o'clock, and Ethel was usually dressed in time for the half-past six breakfast. She went to bed early—everybody went early at the farm—and so she was not sleepy in the morning. If she had been, there was plenty to rouse her at the farm: the shouts of the cow-boy as he brought the cows into the yard to be milked; the noise of the men harnessing their horses for the team or the plough; the bleating of the sheep as they were turned out into their fresh pastures; and the cackling of the hens and geese as they shook out their feathers in search of their morning meal;—all these, and a mingling of other sounds, made Ethel open her eyes and spring up with gladness to meet a new day. How delightful it was to run out with Bridget to see the cows milked, and to drink a glass of the warm frothing liquid, that tasted so sweet and pure! or to go into the dairy to watch Margaret making the cool fresh butter, and to fashion some of it, with her own hands, into round pats, stamped with a swan, for the breakfast-table!

The breakfast itself—when did ever any breakfast taste so nice as at the farm? The fragrant coffee and thick cream; the home-made bread, and rich butter, and new-laid eggs, were enough to tempt the most delicate appetite; and for real hunger there was cold meat, dairy-fed pork, and fried bacon and potatoes. Bread and cheese and home-brewed ale were always on the table for those who liked such fare, and Philip was always one of that number; but Ethel, as you may suppose, kept beside Margaret at the coffee-urn, and confined herself to that beverage.

I wish I could tell you that after breakfast Philip read a few verses out of God's word, and *asked* Him to bless and take care of them through *the day; but such was not the* case, for neither *Philip nor Margaret had learnt* to look up for guidance, nor did they ponder that text which says, "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it."

While Margaret washed the cups and saucers, and Patty cleared the table, Ethel generally filled a basket with food for the poultry and pigeons, and ran out to give the farm fowls their breakfast. As soon as they heard her call they came rushing towards her, each eager to get all that it could for itself, and Ethel often emptied her basket, and had to go in to refill it, before they were all satisfied. And if my readers live or have lived in the country, they will understand Ethel's joy whenever there was a brood of young chickens or goslings to be tended and waited on.

Then, once or twice in the week, there was the bread-making, and the baking, to fill up the morning. The great brick oven, into which Ethel's memorable cake had been put, was heated with fagots of wood, and besides the numerous loaves of bread, tins and dishes of all sorts and sizes, and filled with all sorts of puddings and pies and cakes, were crowded into it. Every time Ethel would think it was impossible that so large a stock could ever be disposed of; and yet, when the next baking-day came, the pantry looked almost empty. One thing was certain: nobody at the farm had any chance of being either starved or stinted.

Three afternoons in the week it was arranged that Ethel should spend them with Miss Cleveland at the rectory. For music, and French, and all the other things that little girls are supposed to learn, could not be quite neglected because mamma was away, and because Ethel had plenty else to occupy her at the farm. But Miss Cleveland was a very nice governess; she explained Ethel's lessons to her in a way that made them quite interesting; and if she thought that the little girl was tired, she sent her for a run into the old-fashioned garden, or took out some picture-books and old curiosities to amuse her. Happily, Ethel was fond of her studies, and really wished to improve herself, for Miss Cleveland was so gentle and kind that some idle girls would have taken advantage of her holding the reins so loosely, and would have done scarcely anything.

Ethel loved Miss Cleveland; and often when the lessons were finished she had many a pleasant chat with her about bygone days, when the rector's gentle sister and her mother were merry school-girls together. It helped to comfort Ethel during her mamma's absence to be able to talk about her to one who had known her so long, and had been such a dear friend to her; and if nearly all that Miss Cleveland had to tell her about her mother only tended to deepen the esteem and affection which she felt for that mother, why, I do not know that anybody was the worse for that.

Sometimes Ethel remained to tea at the rectory, and Margaret fetched her in the cool of the evening. This was generally when Mr. Cleveland was not at home; for being unused to having children around him, his sister thought that it

might fidget him to have Ethel there. And Ethel never cared to stay unless Mr. Cleveland were out, for though not at all a shy child, she yet stood a little in awe of the clergyman. He were so very grave and dignified, and seldom spoke to her except to ask how she was and what she was doing; and he always seemed so absorbed in the sermon-like book he was reading, that Ethel talked in a very subdued tone while in his presence; and once when she ventured to laugh, and Mr. Cleveland looked up, half in surprise from his commentary, Ethel felt as if she had done something wrong, and her cheeks grew hot in a minute.

Mr. Cleveland, good man, had not the least idea of the impression he was making on the mind of his young visitor. He thought she was a pretty, well-behaved little girl, fond, no doubt, of toys and sweetmeats, and of running about from morning till night; and beyond that he thought very little about her. So there was no great friendship at present between Ethel and her minister.

It was on returning in the afternoon from her first music lesson with Miss Cleveland (Patty had fetched her, for Margaret was expecting her husband from town with his orphan niece) that Ethel saw Faith sitting in the arm-chair by the tea-table, looking very tired and a little sad.

## LOST IN A CAVERN.

### In Two Parts.—Part Second.

Reader, have you ever suffered from a nightmare in which you discovered yourself to be alone in the middle of a low tunnel, with miles of darkness on either side of you? If so, you can partially imagine my feelings as I crept, like an unquiet ghost, stealthily along. Gradually divesting myself of hat, cuffs, collar, &c., I placed them here and there in the niches which contained the candles, that they might serve as landmarks on my return. Up one passage and down another, now stopping to listen for the welcome sound of a human voice, now shouting till I was hoarse, I at length imagined that the ten minutes allowed me must have nearly expired, so I determined, as a last hope, to give one more shout down each of the four openings around me, and then return to my brother, whose company I sorely missed.

As I was peering down the first passage to my right, I was startled by hearing behind me what sounded like the falling of some loose stones. I turned quickly round, my heart palpitating violently, and a cold heat creeping over me. It came again, but was farther off than I had at first imagined, and seemed to proceed from a tunnel which I discovered to be entirely devoid of light. Standing stock-still, and staring fixedly at the darkness, with ears straining to catch the faintest sound, and breath held back with suffocating determination, I felt as if glued to the spot, such a horrible fascination had taken hold of me. If the sound had been caused by a human being, surely, I thought, he would have responded to my repeated cries for aid, and not slunk away into the darkness like an evil thing.

And then, if not human—my choice of conjecture was very limited after the tales which I had been taught from infancy to credit—if not human, it must be superhuman! if not flesh and blood, I was in awfully close proximity to a wanderer from the spirit world.

During this unpleasant soliloquy the movement in the dark passage was repeated. It seemed like some one creeping cautiously along, but whether approaching me or going in the opposite direction, the darkness would not at first allow me to determine.

At length, however, I concluded from the diminishing of the sound that the mysterious being was moving farther away, and as the pace was increased, I recognised an unmistakably human footfall, which went a considerable way to banish my fears of the supernatural. The sliding, gliding sound which I so much dreaded had ceased, and there could be little doubt that a pair of boots was in the question.

I now fancied that the unknown being in all probability had not heard my shout of distress, but I could not summon courage to repeat it; so, with a lighted taper in my hand, I determined to follow at a cautious distance, and not to make myself known till I had ascertained somewhat of the character and appearance of my strange companion.

I had not followed far before the sound of footsteps in front of me ceased, and I felt sure that I was discovered. I instinctively blew out my candle, but as I did so a light was struck in front of me, and I perceived by its dim flicker a tall, powerful-looking man. His face was turned away from me, and he did not appear to have discovered my proximity, as, without looking round, he continued his way, and before I could collect myself sufficiently to call, he had disappeared round the farther corner of the tunnel.

My first surprise being over, I reproached myself for having let slip such an opportunity of deliverance, and determined, at all risks, to follow the man and explain to him my circumstances. Surely anything was better than the idea of bearing for a length of time this living death, and though I could not help having dreadful suspicions as to the probable character of my companion, I started in pursuit with despairing eagerness.

But then I had no light, having foolishly blown out my candle, and the passage was dark as night. Fearing that I should lose sight of the man altogether if I returned for one, I contented myself with groping along in the darkness till the end of the tunnel was reached, and then, looking round for the light and its bearer, I discovered them in the act of vanishing down another turning. Determined to make myself heard this time I shouted "Help!" as loud as I could, and ran,

quickly forward. I saw the man start and turn round; and that was all, for the next minute I had fallen heavily over an unseen boulder at my feet, and down to a depth of some eight feet into a large damp hole, which, from its size and shape, seemed to have been originally a well.

The shock of the fall upon my already overstrung nerves was such that I felt suddenly deprived of all power of motion, and lay still for a long time, wondering where I was, and what had happened to me. I supposed that I had struck my head in falling, as there was a burning pain in my temples, and I felt an irresistible stupor gradually stealing over me. I was just able to give a faint call, and then lay in a state of partial insensibility.

Presently a light glimmered above me, and I felt myself drawn upwards.

"Another spy caught!" were the words which I distinctly heard, without attaching any significance to their meaning, for I could neither speak nor move, and lay in a kind of semi-trance, watching the proceedings around me, but unable to give any evidence of animation.

Two men, with lights in their hands, were bending over me, their wild, haggard faces were close to mine, and I felt their hot breath on my cheeks. They carried on a long consultation over me, none of which I can recall but the last ominous words, "Dead men tell no tales," and the next minute I was hoisted on a pair of giant shoulders and in this way carried for some distance.

Where I should have been deposited, or what would have been my fate, I know not, had I been left to the mercy of these ruffians, but soon there was a loud cry, and my bearer, flinging me violently to the ground, made off with his companion.

What followed during the next quarter of an hour is all a blank to me, but when I at length opened my eyes they rested upon John's face, regarding me with the deepest concern and anxiety. He was very pale, and his arm, which was supporting me, trembled violently.

"Thank God, you are alive!" he ejaculated fervently, as my eyes met his with a look of eager inquiry as to what had happened.

Those are awful moments when memory fails in her function, and snaps the thread which links past and present together. In vain I endeavoured, with my brother's help, to recall one incident in the history of the past day. It was all entirely obliterated from my memory, and even when I looked around and discovered the low roof and dark walls of the caves, they seemed quite new and strange to me, and shrouded in a dark veil of mystery and unreality.

"Oh, John, if I could only remember!" I sobbed, and laid my aching head on his shoulder.

"Don't trouble to think now," he said gently; "you have been stunned, but as soon as we can get you out of this horrible place the fresh air will revive you."

*The guide, whose* presence I had not before noticed, now came forward, and with his and my brother's assistance I at length found myself once more in the open air, though daylight had already vanished. The fresh sharp night wind soon brought me to my senses, and gradually, with restored consciousness, I was able to recall the exciting events of the day.

I gave John a full account of all that had befallen me after our separation, and he, in his turn, told me how that a few minutes after my departure he had met with the guide, and they had both set off in search of me, tracking out my path by the various articles of apparel which I had purposely left behind me. When, however, they arrived at the illuminated tunnels, they were sorely perplexed as to which way to take, as all traces of me had disappeared.

At length, after waiting about for some time, hoping that I would return, they had been attracted by the sound of distant voices, and following the direction of the sound, had arrived just in time to discover the ruffians bearing me off. The men, finding themselves pursued, had made off, leaving me behind them, to all appearance dead.

Thus ended an eventful chapter in a life which has since seen many dangers and encountered many difficulties, but it will be long, if ever, ere my adventure of forty years ago is erased from my memory.

My young readers will have rightly concluded that the inmates of the caves were none other than smugglers, whose existence had long been suspected, but not hitherto positively ascertained. As soon, however, as the unpleasant episode in which I figured as the hero had been noised abroad, the caves were regularly searched, and all traces of the smugglers and their contraband goods entirely extirpated.

N. F. L.

## ENIGMA.

My first is in croquet, but not in game.
My second's in picture, but not in frame.
My third is in silver, but not in gold.
My fourth's in heat, but not in cold.
My fifth is in honey, but not in bee.
My sixth is in wave, but not in sea.
My seventh is in daisy, but not in flower.
My eighth is in castle, but not in tower.
My ninth is in sunlight, but not in shade.
My tenth is in trowel, but not in spade.
My eleventh's in miser, but not in wealth.
My twelfth is in sickness, but not in health.
My thirteenth is in gauntlet, but not in glove.
My whole is a lady we dearly love.

MEYNELLA WOOD.

## BURIED EUROPEAN TOWNS.

1. Her papa rises at seven o'clock every morning.

2. You had better put the light, aunt, on the little table.

3. The view from this hill looked so lovely on Saturday.

4. We dined off lamb at Henry's house to-day.

5. It was on a cold, sombre, starless night, that we crossed for the Continent.

6. My uncle is now taking his nap, lest he should be tired this evening.

7. As George was ascending the hill, the guide told him it was the lowest of the range.

8. The Newfoundland dog, Carl, is let loose, so take care, for he is very fierce.

9. In the autumn ices are very rare.

10. When that dog ran, Ada, into the butcher's shop did not you see him steal a bone?

11. Can nest eggs be taken by any one but thoughtless boys? I am sure you would not be so cruel.

12. Ah, Isabel, gin and brandy have been the cause of ruin to many men!

13. Now remember, "Line upon Line" is the name of the book you are to buy for me in town.

C. F. C.

## THE REVERSES OF FORTUNE.

### SOLUTION OF THE EIGHTY-SIXTH PICTURE STORY.

It was on the fourth of December that an unusual commotion was disturbing the general tranquillity of No. 16, the town residence of Mr. Mason; and well might there be a commotion, for on that very day Miss Violet Amy Mason was to become Mrs. Charles Chapplin, unless any untimely accident turned up to prevent the marriage taking place, which, under existing circumstances, appeared highly improbable.

As early as eight o'clock in the morning the cart of Brown, the confectioner, stood at the door, waiting to be relieved of its burden, which consisted of a large and handsome wedding cake, besides sundry other tartlets and eatables, prepared by Mr. Brown for the wedding breakfast; all of which were speedily transferred to the kitchen of No. 16, and again at half-past nine to the large dining-room upstairs, to be arranged by the butler and footman on the large dining-room table. At half-past ten, the butler, having seen the table laid to his satisfaction, despatched the footman to call the other servants, who, when they had come up, stood at the door, expressing their admiration of the cake, and the masterly manner in which the butler had laid out the table. But we must now leave them, and for a short time give our attention to the two most important characters in the ceremony—to wit, the bride and bridegroom. The marriage service being over, the newly wedded couple passed out of the church into the carriage that awaited them, and drove back to No. 16, followed by four other conveyances containing the rest of the party. So happy were the pair, that, as they entered the house where a powdered footman stood ready to receive them, they did not notice a poor ragged little crossing-sweeper, with a face so aged by care and trouble that it would have been difficult to tell how many years of suffering he had seen, who, with face pinched and wan, and without a covering to his head, stood leaning his pale and dirty little cheek against the handle of his broom, shivering the while with cold and hunger. They did not see him, but he saw them, and raising his head gazed silently at their handsome clothes, wondering what it was like to be free from want and the pangs of hunger that were so familiar to him. For a while he forgot his troubles in looking at the well-dressed ladies and gentlemen as they poured into the house; but it was soon over, the footman closed the door with a bang, and a cold blast of the north wind once more called back the little beggar to the world that had so few of its comforts for him. In the meanwhile the party were doing ample justice to the splendid breakfast before them, and in course of time the bride cut the cake that looked much too good to be eaten. Happy bride and happy bridegroom, little did they dream in the midst of the prosperity of the sorrow that was in store for them.

But we must leave them to themselves for a short while, in order that I may introduce into my narrative a new character, who is no other than Mr. Chapplin, senior. He had always objected to the match for private reasons, and when he saw that his son was determined, allowed him to marry, but refused to settle on him any money, or even recognise him as his son. This was a terrible blow to Charles, but, as you well know, he married in spite of it all, and resolved to bear the consequences. He thus was thrown entirely upon the resources of his father-in-law, who let him and his wife live in No. 16, and granted them £1,500 per annum. With this fortune they lived very happily for six months, when Mr. Mason's affairs went suddenly to ruin, and, as a matter of course, his fortune too. Being a very old man, and unable to bear up against the shock, he died, leaving Charles and Amy without a penny in the world. Of course No. 16 had to be given up; so Amy, with a few clothes and a little money packed up in a small valise, left her home quietly one morning by the very door at which a short time ago she had entered in such wealth and prosperity; and the next day the house and furniture was put up to auction, the proceeds of which were to go towards paying for Mr. Mason's defects.

Mr. Chapplin, senior, sat in his easy chair in his study and at his study table, perusing a newspaper in that part of it headed "Bankruptcy Court," which evidently did not please him, for his usually red cheek had turned very pale. Suddenly throwing down the paper he folded his hands together and appeared wrapped up in profound meditation. It was not, however, destined to last long, for he was soon disturbed by a knock at the door, and his footman ushered into his presence a poor ragged little beggar boy, who said he had something important to communicate. There was no mistaking that careworn face and tired look, it was the little crossing-sweeper. Mr. Chapplin knew him too, and had often given him pennies, for Mr. Chapplin was benevolent in his way.

"Well, my little man, what's your business here to-day?" he asked.

"Why, sir, I've summat to tell 'ee of;" and with that he began a long story, the drift of which was as follows:—

"About a fortnight ago a woman and her husband took lodgings next to ours, who seemed by their faces and gentle manners to have been born for something better; added to which the young woman was always crying, whilst the man too seemed ready to break down. I peeped in at the window one morning, and saw the wife crying as if her heart would break, whilst the husband tried to comfort her, saying, 'Be firm, dear, be firm like me; we shall be rich again soon, when I am well enough to go to my father, Mr. Chapplin: see how firm I am;' and he turned his head away that she might not see his face, but I saw it, that he was crying bitterly in spite of himself. And I turned away lest I should cry too, and said to myself, 'Chapplin, I know him;' so I ups and ran here as hard as I could, knowing for certain that you would help them."

"Certainly, certainly," said Mr. Chapplin, in a husky voice. "Dear me, how bad my throat is! go downstairs and get some dinner, take some home for them, and tell them I'll come to-morrow; by-the-bye, what's their address?"

Having told him, the boy went downstairs without needing to be told twice, where he had a good dinner for the first time in his life, and then took his departure.

Next morning, on hearing a knock, he put his head out of window and saw Mr. Chapplin, senior, standing outside his son's lodgings waiting for admittance. Amy heard the knock too, and said to Charles, who was sitting on a stool (the only piece of furniture in the room), "Charlie, he's come at last." With trembling hands she undid the latch, and the next moment was clasped in the arms of her father-in-law. I shall not attempt to describe the meeting that took place, in which the father forgave his son, kissed his daughter, and promised the boy (who had just come in) a dinner for the second time in his life; suffice it to say that he took them both to his own home, and gave the boy employment, so that in a short time they were all three restored to health and happiness.

REGINALD T. (15).

*Leyton, Essex.*

## PICTURE STORY.

### No. LXXXVIII.

HONOURABLE MENTION.—Amelia le F., Bessie M. D., Katherine L. S., Lillie, Marie A. M., Meynella W., Jessie A. D., Annie E. W., Bertha C., Mary A. H., Lucille L., Emily A. M. J., Lucy T., Kate E. D., Mary D., Geraldine K. K., Jane N., Fanny J. T., Frederick R., Frank F. P., Lynx.'; Philip le F., John T.

Nice papers are often put aside through inattention to the rules; be particular in your compliance with them. Always address your letters as follows:—"The Rev. DR. WHITTEMORE, 24, Paternoster Row, London." We again thank the senders of photographs, cards, flowers, &c. We carefully treasure up these mementoes of our dear friends' affectionate regard.

Letters for the Editor and books for review should be addressed as above. Anonymous letters cannot be noticed.

EDITOR.

[IN THE BOYS' PLAYROOM.]

## AUNT MILLICENT'S CHARGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SOLDIER HAROLD," &C.

### CHAPTER VIII.—ONLY COLOURED PAPER, BUT IT BROUGHT TROUBLE.

MRS. GASCOIGNE was rather a weak and watery sort of lady, as Millicent found when she went during the following week to see her. Selfishly taken up with her own ailments and her weak nerves, husband and children were quite secondary considerations; but they were used to it, and took it as a matter of course,—except Ida, who was growing now to need more sympathy and affection than she was likely to receive.

A luxurious home, replete with every comfort that money could purchase or refinement suggest, was Rothwell Hall, but it *lacked* that bond of true loving sympathy without which home is scarcely home.

Millicent thought what a work there might be for Ida here, to soften down irritability, and smooth over, with her bright cheerful spirit, the rough places! But at present Ida was like the rest, thinking only of herself as she came dancing into the room, and expressing her delight at seeing Millicent with a youthful exuberance that was anything but pleasing to her mother.

"Ida, my dear child, when will you remember my poor nerves? I declare you are most distracting; you are nothing better than a great rough boy, and I am sure Miss Grey will think so."

But Miss Grey thought nothing of the sort: she felt Ida's warm loving grasp quite refreshing after the indifferent touch of her fingers which Mrs. Gascoigne had given her.

"Oh, mother, I forgot," answered Ida, carelessly; and then she went on talking to Millicent with great animation, but quite engrossing the conversation; Mrs. Gascoigne meanwhile looking dreamily on, and balancing the tips of her fingers one against another, until she suddenly roused up, exclaiming with more energy than Millicent would have thought her capable of,—

"Go away and practise your music, Ida, and leave Miss Grey and me to ourselves. You talk and talk, and there is no chance for any one else to get a word in."

Ida, not the least abashed, answered with a laugh, that she had more to say than any one else, gave Miss Grey a hearty kiss, more loud than ladylike, and ran away.

"Ida has such wild spirits, she quite exhausts me," languidly remarked her mother.

Millicent did not stay long; and when she left she could not but feel thankful that her lot had been cast, not at the grand Hall, but in the comfortable, homely vicarage.

Oh, dear reader, it is not riches alone that will bring happiness: a loving spirit, and an unselfish consideration for others, will make you happy anywhere, let the outward lot be what it may.

In a week or two Agatha was able to leave her sofa, and to take short strolls on the sands with her aunt and the children. But she had to be very careful; any over-exertion and over-fatigue would soon make her as bad as ever again.

Sometimes Ida Gascoigne joined them, but Agatha would not warm towards her; outwardly civil she was obliged to be, but it was in a cold, distant, unbendable manner. And when Millicent remonstrated with her, her answer was that she did not want to make friends with any one at Rothwell; she had left all she cared for behind at Willington.

The boys went to school, the same school at Low Marston that the Gascoignes attended; they were away nearly the whole day; and during the short time they were at home, Arnold and Basil and Ernest were inseparable. Little Johnnie did not care to climb about and do as they did, so he had to amuse himself, and very dull work he found it.

The boys' playroom or workshop at the Hall was a large room at the top of the house, over the kitchen region, where they might make as much noise as they liked, with no fear of disturbing Mrs. Gascoigne. Here all sorts of things went on, mysteries to the uninitiated, as the boys allowed no one to go in, and never divulged what they did there, whether it was worth keeping secret or not; and Arnold was very much elated to think that he was considered of sufficient importance to be permitted the right of entrance.

Once Ida had ventured in, but she was met by such a storm from Basil that she never tried it again. But you and I, dear reader, are privileged people, and we will step in and see what they are about this summer evening.

*The room was, as we have said,* half playroom half workshop. Some carpenters' tools lay about, and the floor was scattered with shavings; while two or three partly finished wooden articles stood on a shelf opposite the door; but it was not these that engaged the attention of the three occupants at present.

Basil was in one corner without his jacket, and his shirt-sleeves turned up to his elbows, busily engaged in cleaning a gun, his father's present to him on his last birthday, and of which he was very proud. Ernest and Arnold were stooping over a table endeavouring to construct an enormous kite, the frame of which stood reared up against the wall. Peals of laughter burst from them occasionally, for they were cutting out grotesque figures wherewith to adorn their handiwork, and were highly amused at their own performance.

"What a row you fellows do make, to be sure!" said Basil at last.

"Oh, Basil, you can't tell what funny things we are making; do come and look," said Arnold.

"Too busy. But you should have some coloured paper; don't you see, silly boys, those things will never show on the white ground of your kite."

"No more they will!" exclaimed Ernest. "What donkeys we were not to think of that before! it's a bright idea, worthy of Basil. And I know of some splendid coloured paper that will just do. You wait there till I fetch it, Arnold."

Ernest ran downstairs to the schoolroom; he remembered that the day before, while looking in the closet there for something, he had spied a roll such as he wanted; and whether it belonged to anybody or not he did not care to inquire; he wanted it, and that was enough.

He did not expect to find Ida there; but there she was, sitting at the table, which was strewed with various sheets of coloured paper—the very paper that Ernest had set his mind on. She was making some pretty mats of it, one was finished, and another was nearing its completion.

"Ida, I want that paper," said Ernest, abruptly.

"You can't have it then," answered Ida, looking up quickly; "it is mine. I got papa to bring me it from Low Marston the day before yesterday. Don't you see that I am making some mats."

"Mats! pooh! rubbish! I want it for something far more important than mats."

"What do you want it for?" asked Ida, eagerly; "tell me, and then perhaps I may let you have it."

"As if I was going! Tell you! Our secrets are not for girls to know."

"Then you don't have my paper," said Ida, firmly.

Ernest broke out and called her selfish and ill-natured; but he was obliged to go back without the paper he came for.

"Haven't you brought any?" said Arnold, disappointed to see Ernest return empty-handed.

No. It is Ida's, she says; and she won't let me have it, mean girl that she is!" and he explained what he wanted, and why he could not have it.

"I'll soon settle the matter," said Basil, "if you fellows promise faithfully not to touch my gun while I am away."

"All right," said Ernest.

But as soon as the door shut on his brother, he walked up to the corner, took up the gun, examined it very carefully all over, and laid it down again just in the same position.

"I wish father would give me one," he said, half enviously.

"Oh, Ernest," said Arnold, "you should not have touched it; you said you wouldn't."

"I didn't. And Basil will never be any wiser unless you tell him."

Arnold was silent; but he knew Ernest had given an implied promise if not an actual one, and he was uneasy.

Meanwhile Basil strode downstairs just as he was, with hands as black and greasy as well could be, entered the schoolroom, and walked straight up to Ida.

"We want that paper, and must have it; you can get some more," he said, in the tone of authority he often used.

"You shall not have it; I told Ernest so," answered Ida, her colour rising. "Oh, look, Basil," she went on, with an air of disgust, "just look at your hands! Oh, do keep away! you will spoil my pretty work if you don't take care."

"I'll rub my hands on your dress if *you* don't take care!" growled Basil. "Now, then, are you going to give me that paper?"

"No."

"Very well, you must take the consequences."

And Basil put out his dirty hand and took up the mat that lay finished on the table.

The delicate primrose paper was completely spoiled by two great greasy finger-marks right in the middle, and the mat that Ida had taken such pains to make was ruined. It was with difficulty that she kept back her tears, but she was too proud to let Basil see how he had distressed her.

"There, Basil, you have done mischief enough," she said, as quietly as she could; "you can take all the paper,—it is useless my trying to make anything pretty."

"Ah, ah, my young lady!" chuckled Basil, "I knew I should soon bring you to reason. Your things cannot be of half so much importance as ours. Here, roll up the paper and put it under my arm. I shall spoil it if I touch it, it seems."

Ida rolled up the paper, tied a string round it, made a loop at the end, and hung it on Basil's little finger—all without speaking a word.

"That's right. I say, Ida, you're not vexed?"

But Ida did not answer. She turned away to the window, and Basil left the room with a slight misgiving that he had not acted kindly.

"You don't mean to say that you have succeeded?" cried Ernest, when Basil threw down the roll on the table. "How ever did you manage it?"

"I have managed it; isn't that enough? You have your paper,—it does not matter how I got it."

"Basil always accomplishes everything," remarked Ernest to Arnold as they set to work on the paper they had so longed for.

But Basil went back to his gun, not in the best of humours with himself. He wished he had not interfered.

However, he quite made up his mind that he would buy Ida some more the next day when they left school. But school-time came and went, and he never thought anything more about it.

And what of poor Ida, thus suddenly deprived of her amusement?

When Basil had gone she took up the mat upon which she had spent so much time, and which bore the mark of his touch, tore it up into the smallest pieces, and threw it out of the window; and then she sank down on the floor, covered her face with her hands, and leaned her head against the window-frame.

The boys thwarted her in every imaginable way, and mamma did not care! Perhaps papa would, but Ida was too proud to complain; she would bear it all in silence,—literally in silence as far as her brothers were concerned, for she should not speak to them for long enough, that was the best way to treat them.

And thus Ida sat, nursing evil and unforgiving thoughts in her heart, when all of a sudden there came across her the words that Millicent had spoken at their first interview,—

"If you want to be loved, the only way is to love."

"Oh," said Ida, in answer to the inward voice, "if I were with Miss Grey that would be easy; but I cannot be expected to do it here."

But something whispered that here and now was the time and place when it was to be done.

Just then Mrs. Gascoigne's maid, Martin, who had somewhat of the charge of Ida now that her governess was away, came in and said,—

"It is a beautiful evening, Miss Ida, wouldn't you like a walk? I am going into the village on an errand for mistress, and you might go with me as far as the vicarage if you like."

Ida jumped up and put on the hat the servant had brought her, glad of any change to relieve the gloomy tenor of her thoughts.

But they had not to go as far as the vicarage, for they met Miss Grey just outside the hall grounds, and a pleasant walk and talk with her while Martin was doing her errand cheered Ida's spirits, though she said nothing of what was troubling her.

All the next day Ida kept out of her brothers' way as much as possible; which was not difficult, for they took very little notice of her.

But the next evening when she met Basil in the passage she said,—

"I am sorry I did not give you that paper willingly, Basil."

"Paper! what paper? Oh, I remember. Well, I got it, so it didn't matter. But I meant to get you some more, Ida."

"Oh, I don't want any more. But, Basil, if there is anything I could help you with at any time I should be so glad to do it."

"Would you? Then I wish you would sew me a button on this shirt wristband. I have told Martin about it over and over again, and she takes no notice."

That was not at all what Ida meant, and she was not fond of using her needle, especially for anything in the way of mending; but she ran at once for her work-basket, and sewed on the button so quickly and cleverly that her brother rewarded her with a kiss, and the remark,—

"I believe you are going to make yourself useful at last, Ida."

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## Chapter IX.—Martha.

Miss Grey's class the second Sunday afternoon came down to four; Lydia and Ellen were not there. Lydia, by dint of persistent coaxing and sullen obstinacy, had succeeded in prevailing upon her father to allow her to take the vacant place in the dressmaking establishment at Low Marston, where Ellen was apprentice.

"Anything for peace' sake," John Eldridge had said.

But the mother's heart misgave her, and it was sorely against her will that she prepared her child for the business she had chosen; she would far rather have seen Lydia in a respectable place of service, such as she herself had been in in her youth. But Lydia scorned the idea; she should be her own mistress now, and have no one to control her, she thought.

The mother regretted it the more when in a week or two Rose brought home the tidings that there was a young girl wanted at the vicarage to help in the nursery, and to wait on Miss Agatha.

"Would'nt it be nice if Lydia could have gone mother?" Rosa said. "Oh, how I should like it! to be always near Miss Grey. But I suppose I I am too little."

"You seem to think a deal of Miss Grey," said Mrs. Eldridge.

"Yes, mother. Miss Grey is just perfect; and —and she loves us, I am sure of that. And she is so sorry when we are naughty; I mean to be good always."

"It isn't likely that you'll succeed, then; no one ever did yet; however, there's naught against trying. And I must say this for you, Rose; you have been more bidable since Miss Grey took you in hand; very different from poor Lydia!" and the mother heaved a deep sigh.

*Rose's face* shone with pleasure, but she said nothing; only deep down in her heart there was a feeling of thankfulness to the loving Father in heaven, who had sent the kind lady to teach her how to be good.

Millicent was returning one evening from visiting a sick woman a little distance from the village. She was walking quickly, for it was getting towards the children's bedtime, and she wanted to be at home. But in turning a corner of the road she came suddenly upon Martha Bird, gathering up sticks, and now and then pulling bits of dead wood out of the hedge.

The child started, dropped her basket, and coloured crimson when Miss Grey spoke to her.

"Busily employed helping grandmother; that's right Martha," she said kindly; and was passing on, when something in the child's face made her stop.

"What is it, Martha?" she said, laying her hand on the little girl's shoulder. "Have you anything to say to me, dear?"

Martha twisted up the corner of her pinafore, but was too shy to speak, though here was the opportunity she had been wishing for, of telling Miss Grey her difficulties.

Millicent waited a minute, and then she said,—

"I am very glad to see you so attentive on a Sunday, Martha. Do you think you try a little to practise what you learn?"

"Yes, ma'am, I hope so. But—oh, Miss Grey, will you please tell me if I must always do what grandmother tells me?"

"Why, yes, little Martha. I think a dutiful little granddaughter would always try to do that."

"But if I know that it is wrong," Martha said in a low tone.

"Perhaps you are not quite the judge of that, dear. You must believe that generally grandmother knows best. But tell me all about it, and then I will help you if I can."

And Millicent, putting aside her own wish to be at home, sat down on the grass, and drew Martha down beside her; and with a few sobs, the little girl poured out her story into the helping, sympathizing ear.

"That Sunday, ma'am, you know, when Miss Agatha came down to the sands to us, I did not a bit want to go, but grannie would make me, and I was so afraid you would think I went willingly; but grannie gets so angry if we don't do just what she tells us. And now, to-night, she will be ever so cross if I don't take my basket home full of sticks, and she says I am to pull bits out of the hedge, and I know it is wrong, Miss Grey. What am I to do? I used to be afraid before of being caught; I did not mind so long as no one saw me. But since you came, I have learnt that God sees me always, and I don't want to grieve Him."

Miss Grey looked at the earnest, tear-stained face.

"No, dear," she said at last, gravely. "I think you must run the risk of grieving grannie

rather than the good Father in heaven. But have you told the dear Lord Jesus about it? when we are in any difficulty it is best to go straight to Him with it. If it is the right thing to do, He will give you grace gently and firmly, yet dutifully, to tell your grandmother that you cannot disobey God's commands; and then if she is cross, you must try and bear it patiently."

Martha covered her face with her hands for a few minutes, and then she said,—

"But, please, ma'am, you don't know what grannie is when she is cross; she maybe would not speak to me for a week; and—and she might punish Willie for it, and I could not bear that."

"But you know what the loving Saviour bore for us, for you, little Martha, a far heavier load than he ever lays upon His children, for He is with them through all, and that lightens everything. He takes the lambs in His arms, so you may be sure He will not let you suffer more than is good for you. Trust Him, Martha, and He will guide you and help you. But see, we have been talking, and your basket is not full; I think I must help you to fill it, as I have been hindering you. We will go to the other side of the hedge, and see what we can find there."

There were plenty of sticks there, and the basket was soon full without taking any that they should not take.

Martha thanked Miss Grey gratefully, and went home strengthened by Millicent's kind words.

But Martha's difficulties had put a plan into Miss Grey's head, which she did not like to mention to her just then lest it should fail. She wanted, as we have seen, additional help in the nursery; and though she had certainly intended to have an older girl, yet, for Martha's sake, she thought she would endeavour to overlook her youth and try her. Hers was evidently a difficult position with her grandmother; and she seemed so anxious to do right that it might be just the help she needed to remove her for a while from the influences that surrounded her.

So the following day Millicent presented herself at Mrs. Bird's cottage. The old woman was busy washing, and Willie was making baskets. Martha was not there, having gone on an errand into the village.

Old Sally stared hard at her visitor, then motioned with her head towards a chair, and bent down again over her washing-tub. Thinking she guessed Miss Grey's errand, she determined to be the first to speak about it.

"Be ye come to scold about that seaweed business? 'cause there's no need. Young Miss said plenty about it. Martha's my lass, and I shall do what I please with her."

"Yes, I am afraid my niece was rather rude, Mrs. Bird; I am very sorry, but I did not come about that."

Then Millicent unfolded her errand. Old Sally rested her hand upon the side of her tub and listened; and Willie, too, stopped in his work. They had both heard of the want at the vicarage, but had never thought of Martha as likely to fill it; and her grandmother had sense enough to see what a good thing it would be for her, only she would not let Miss Grey know that she was glad of her offer; she only said she did not know how she could spare the child, but she would consider of it. And Millicent went away, feeling that her kind effort for Martha had not been appreciated.

At the door she met the girl herself, and said to her, "Would you like to come and live at the vicarage, Martha?"

Her whole face lighted up, and she exclaimed energetically,—

"Oh, wouldn't I just! oh, dear ma'am, may I? it would be too delightful!"

"You must ask your grandmother to consent then," answered Miss Grey, smiling at her eagerness.

Martha rushed into the cottage, anxious to learn if the good news were true.

"Of course you may go, child; it would never do to refuse an offer like that; but I wasn't going to let Miss Grey see that I jumped at it. And you've no call, Martha, to be so pleased at the thought of leaving your old grannie."

"But you know, grannie, I shall not be so very far away. And then I shall be earning my own living; won't that be a great thing."

Martha felt very proud at having obtained the place that all the young girls were wishing for; and Rose unselfishly congratulated her friend.

And when the next week Martha took up her abode at the vicarage, it was with the firm purpose of being the best little servant possible. She thought that now all difficulties would be at an end, and everything would go smoothly; but she was soon to learn, as we all must, dear reader, that there will be trials and crosses in every place, and that grace and strength are needed to walk bravely the daily path of life, be it where it may.

## FARMER TREGONY'S LETTER.

THE last sweet organ notes were ringing through Trevellyn Church, and the worshippers were slowly dispersing in little knots to their different homes, as Roger Lang the postman descended the well-worn steps that led from the western entrance, and turned towards his home. It was only once a month, poor fellow, that Roger had the opportunity of joining with others on a Sunday in public worship. But this privilege, scanty though it was, he prized very highly, and never failed to use carefully. To-night Mr. Penrhyn's sermon had been upon the duty of Christian people "letting their light shine, of doing something daily for God," and he had told Roger, and those who listened with him, that there were none whose privileges were too few, or opportunities too scanty, for them to carry out this rule of conduct.

Now Roger was a Christian, and felt that this

matter was one which concerned him. "What can I do to let my light shine?" he kept asking himself, as with his wife and children he paced thoughtfully along the rocky path which led to his little cottage among the hills. And even when he rose on the Monday morning for his usual toilsome tramp with the letters, this train of reflection had not entirely passed away. "What can I do to let my light shine to-day? I don't know," he mused to himself; "but by God's help I'll do something," and with this resolve he set out upon his rounds.

Now, although Roger's work was toilsome and wearisome enough, he had advantages in it which his less fortunate brother postmen in great cities are without. The fresh soft sea breezes rustled through gorse and fern, as he made his way across the moors, from one little hamlet to another. And as he passed from farm to farm, and cottage to cottage, his eyes, instead of falling upon dusty pavements and glaring shop fronts, rested upon undulating expanses of turf and purple heather, blue sky flecked with little silvery clouds, spread itself above him, and sometimes near at hand, and sometimes far away, he saw the many-coloured sea with the fisher's sails upon its breast.

But yet all these things, beautiful as they were, did not prevent Roger Lang from getting tired, and he was always very glad when the sun began to dip over Lundy, as he reached the last house on his beat. This was Farmer Tregony's, and here it was his custom to sit down to rest for five minutes or so, while he exchanged with the farmer any Trevellyn news.

He saw the house before him now, nestling in the little combe, with the stream dashing along over the stones at the bottom of the orchard, and the cows looking at him over the farmyard gate, with a satisfied dreamy air as if they would say, "See how nice it is to be a cow."

But although Roger mechanically quickened his steps as he saw the farm before him, he did not approach it with quite so light a heart as usual; for the fact was, that he was thinking to himself, "Here's the day nearly over, and I've not done anything to let my light shine as yet." And as this thought occurred to him rather sadly, he stepped over the threshold and found himself in the farmer's kitchen.

He was welcomed as usual and heartily greeted by Mr. Tregony, to whom he gave some letters, which he had brought with him from the town.

"Sit down man and rest awhile," said the farmer, as Roger went towards the settle, "and Mary, lass," he continued to his daughter, "bring a glass of our ale."

"Thank you kindly," said Roger, as he took the proffered refreshment, while the farmer busied himself with opening and reading his letters.

As Roger was thus resting, his eyes took a survey of the room. The wide fireplace, the guns *above the mantel shelf, the* brass candlesticks, the bunches of sage and herbs in the rack overhead, the dresser with the crockery neatly arranged, and the bright pewter mugs hanging from their respective nails; over all these his gaze wandered. But when his looks turned to a certain little black oak table, on which was a large, but as he knew never-opened, family Bible, covered over by a large crochet mat which supported a handsome lamp, then a flash of intelligence sparkled in Roger's eyes as he turned to the farmer and said, as if in a tone of surprise,—

"Why, farmer! you read your letters then after all!"

"Read 'em, man, of course I do," said the other, "What are they written for but to read, I should like to know?"

"And so whenever a letter comes to the farm, you read it, eh?" continued Roger.

"I should rather think so," said Tregony, whose correspondence was not large, and who was somewhat proud of being what he and his neighbours called, "a bit of a scholard."

"Well, I did'nt think you did," said the other doubtfully.

"Do you take me for a fool, man?" said Tregony, rather gruffly; "never a letter, or note, or scrap, comes into this house, but I reads it, ay, and answers it too," he continued, "for that matter."

"Well," said Roger, "I must have made a mistake, I suppose, but I did think that I'd seen a letter under that lamp there that's been lying there a goodish bit, that you hadn't opened and read."

"Under the lamp," said the farmer getting up and going towards the table. "I haven't seed no letter hereabouts," as he lifted up the lamp carefully, and took off the mat; "and what's more," he continued, "there aint one either."

"No letter!" said Roger; "why, I can see it now."

"I tell ee," exclaimed the other, now fairly at a loss, "there aint no scrap of a letter here, there's nowt under this here lamp but the mat and the old Bible."

"Well, and the old Bible is the letter I mean," said Roger.

"It's a pretty longish one, then," said Tregony.

"Long or not long, it's one I wish you would read," replied Roger; "it's about important business, and has some questions in it that ought to be answered; look here," and he turned over the leaves. "'I have a message from God unto thee.' Judges iii. 20; and here again, 'How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?' Depend upon it, farmer, this letter, which has been left under your lamp so long wants an answer."

And so Roger Lang, the postman, turned on his homeward way, praying that the seed sown in faith might prosper, and asking God to bless his little effort to let his light shine. And as for farmer Tregony, he sat still smoking by the fire for a long

time after Roger had left him, thinking over Roger's words; "the letter which has been so long under the lamp wants an answer," till presently as the light began to grow a little dim, he went up to the table and turned over some of the leaves of the still open book. As he did so a lock of grey hair fell fluttering to the ground; it had been his mother's—tears filled his eyes. Passage after passage he read marked by her hand, and as the sun grew red and golden in the west, the last sight it saw, and it did not see a gladder sight in England that day, was John Tregony upon his knees; and the sweetest words which the sea breezes wafted up to the throne of God that evening, were his words, as he said, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

And that was how the letter under the lamp got answered at last. BASIL EDWARDS.

## THE PHANTOM ISLANDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ENCHANTED OVEN."

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

"PAPA, papa!" cried little Lelia Cameron, almost in a frightened voice, one hot August afternoon, "come here and look out of the window. What does it mean? how did they get there? I'm sure there was nothing between us and Tadoussac this morning, and now there are three islands, all covered with churches and houses and castles. It's like a fairy tale! how does it happen?"

Now if Captain Cameron had been a papa given to improving the occasion, he would have explained to his little girl what is meant by a mirage, and have shown her the relationship between the fairy islands before her and the rainbow. He might have told her about mock suns, and a wonderful vision seen in the Alps, after a terrible accident had happened on one of its most dangerous peaks; or he might have told her of travellers in the hot African deserts led away by visions of green palm trees further and further from the water on which their lives depended.

But this morning Captain Cameron was a papa in a very great hurry. The steamer by which he was going across the St. Lawrence to Tadoussac lay off the long pier at Rivière du Loup, and would soon be starting, and poor Mrs. Cameron had a bone in her little finger, and could not tie her bonnet-strings; the carriage had been waiting quite five minutes in the broiling sun, the coachman and horses would have sunstrokes, and the steamer would start without them. So papa was in a dreadful fidget; and as Mrs. Cameron opened the door of the tiny bedroom leading out of the sitting-room, as in all French "habitant" houses, and came out just at this moment, he paid little attention to Celia's question, but said,—

"Only a mirage, my dear.—Come, Julia, we shall certainly miss our boat."

Celia felt very sorry now that she had said that morning she did not wish to go to Tadoussac. The steamer would pass quite close to the magical islands, and she should see what they were made of. If only Colonel Jordan, whom her parents were going to visit, had not been so fond of teasing, she would have liked to go, but now it was quite too late; she had all her garden things on, and was by no means in visiting trim.

"Take care of yourself, darling," said Mrs. Cameron, "we shall be back to-morrow; if you like you can put on your big hat and go down to the ponds; you will find a little shade under that clump of bushes, and then you can see us start."

Celia thought the idea a good one; as soon as the carriage had bowled away amidst clouds of dust, she took her hat from its peg and went down to the shore. She was very glad to creep out of the blazing sun into the atom of shade made by the bushes. Everything seemed to glare, even the long reach of uncovered mud between her and the water and the grey St. Lawrence, for the St. Lawrence near Rivière du Loup is as grey as, and very like, the Severn, near Bristol, though it is very much wider, so much so that the high mountains on the opposite side seem very little higher than the Welsh hills.

There were two steamers at the pier. One Celia knew was the *Union*, by which her parents were going to Tadoussac, the other was the *Eclipse*, and was going to Quebec.

It seemed a long time before either of the steamers started; at last the *Union*, after getting up steam very violently, and ringing a great many bells, set off for Tadoussac, a long column of smoke trailing behind it like a black flag.

Celia watched anxiously as the vessel drew near to those wounderful islands, which changed every minute; the boat seemed about to charge right through them.

"It will run aground, they will be wrecked," thought Celia, but more wonderful than ever, the islands seemed to open to let the steamer through, and then closed again, but the phantom city had disappeared, and instead, it appeared to Celia as if the islands were covered with groups of enormous columns.

In the mean time the second steamer lay quiet and idle at the pier; the captain was not thinking of sailing yet.

"I've half a mind to fetch the sovereign uncle Harry gave me," said Celia, "and to go down and see whether the captain would not take me to the islands. I should like to explore them, and I could come home with papa and mamma to-morrow. I must put on my tidy things though, and I do wish it wasn't quite so hot."

She sat a little longer, whilst her curiosity battled with her laziness, but the laziness got beaten, and in a few minutes Celia found herself with her sovereign tightly clutched in her hand, walking towards the pier, not by the common-

place dusty road, but by a green path which wound along the top of the low lichen-covered rocks.

As the little girl drew near to the end of the pier she began to wonder whether the captain *would* take her to the phantom islands and whether they would be strong enough to bear her. She had even some idea of turning back, but somehow she was much nearer to the steamer than she had expected, and there was the captain on the paddle-box beckoning to her, so she went on.

"So you want to go to the islands," said the captain, as he jumped off the paddle-box and offered her his arm into the boat. "I shall just have time to take you there before starting for Quebec; but you must pay your money first."

"How did he know all about it?" thought Celia; but she handed him her sovereign, and then ventured to ask shyly,—

"What are the islands called, captain?"

"Oh, they're the castles in the air you have so often heard about; some people call them castles in Spain."

"But we're not in Spain," said Celia, "we're in Canada."

"Yes, but you can build castles in Spain just as safely at a distance as you can there, and they stand just as well?"

"I wonder whether it's safe to go there?" said Celia, doubtfully; for only the day before she had heard her mother say to Captain Cameron,—

"Castles in the air are very pleasant, but I don't think they're very safe or very wholesome."

"Supposing I should catch an illness, or the castle should tumble down with me in it," she thought, "what would mamma say?"

But when she looked up, the captain had vanished, and the boat was close to the islands, and sailing round and round without appearing to get any nearer. The islands themselves looked very like the icebergs Celia had seen off the Strait of Belleisle, white and shining, and broken into peaks and turfets and pinnacles. Celia looked for the captain, and spied him looking at his watch.

"Very nearly time to go back," he said solemnly, "only five minutes more."

"But I want to land," said Celia, indignantly; "I paid you for it, I want to see what the islands are made of!"

"Soap-suds and sugar. I can't get any nearer than this, but if you like to jump ashore you may, there's some one who seems to know you."

Celia required no further bidding, but sprang upon a rock close to which they were passing; it was a wonderful jump, and it seemed as if, after taking it, she fell an enormous distance; she shut her eyes in fear, for she thought she had missed the land and fallen into the sea; but at last she found herself standing on something which felt like moss or cotton wool, or very warm, soft snow. She ventured to open her eyes, and saw the steamer sailing away towards Rivière du Loup. She was on the enchanted islands, and determined *to make the best of her opportunities.*

## BEAUTIFUL HANDS.

As a young friend was standing with us noticing the pedestrians on the sidewalk, a very stylish young lady passed us. "What beautiful hands Miss—— has!" exclaimed our friend.

"What makes them beautiful?"

"Why, they are small, white, soft, and exquisitely shaped."

"Is that all that constitutes the beauty of the hand? Is not something more to be included in your catalogue of beauty, which you have not enumerated to make the hand desirable?"

"What more would you have?"

"Are they *charitable* hands? Have they ever fed the poor? Have they ever carried the necessities of life to the widow and the orphan? Has their soft touch ever smoothed the irritation of sickness, and the agonies of pain? Do the poor bless those rosy-tipped fingers as their wants are supplied by them?

"Are they *useful* hands? Have they been taught that the world is not a playground, or a theatre of display, or a mere lounging place? Do those delicate hands ever labour? Are they ever employed about the domestic duties of life—the homely, ordinary employments of the household? Or does the owner leave all that to her mother, while she nourishes her delicate hands in idleness?

"Are they *modest* hands? Will they perform their charities or their duties without vanity? Or do they pander to the pride of their owner by their delicacy and beauty? Does she think more of their display than the improvement of her mind and character, and the salvation of her immortal soul?

"Are they *humble* hands? Will their owner extend them to grasp the hand of that old schoolfellow, who sat at the same desk with her, and on the same recitation bench, but who now must earn her living by her labour? Or will they remain concealed, in their exclusiveness, in her aristocratic muff, as she sweeps by her former companions?

"Are they *holy* hands? Are they ever clasped in prayer, or elevated in praise? Does she remember the God who has made her to differ from so many other girls, and devote her mind, her heart, her *hands* to His service? Does she try to imitate her Saviour by going about doing good? Or are her hands too delicate, too beautiful, to be employed in good works? These are the qualities that make a hand beautiful."

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

THE next Quarterly Service will be held at St. Katherine Cree Church, Leadenhall Street, on Sunday afternoon, April 2nd, at half-past three o'clock. Sermon by the Editor, who will be glad to speak to any of his dear friends after the service.

# SUNSHINE.

EDITED BY W. M. WHITTEMORE, D.D., RECTOR OF ST. KATHERINE CREE, LONDON.

No. 173. MAY, 1876. [ONE PENNY.

[ALINE IN THE CHURCH PORCH.]

## LITTLE ALINE.

### A STORY OF GIPSY LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PET'S DIFFICULTIES."

### CHAPTER XIII.—LITTLE FAITH AT THE FARM.

FAITH had, of course, heard from her uncle and aunt that Ethel Raymond was living with them at the farm, having been left by her parents in their care; and she was sorry that there was another stranger, and that stranger a young lady, for her to meet and get acquainted with.

Philip had pointed out the Hall to her as they drove past it in the light cart, and Faith knew that the owner of such a mansion and grounds must be a rich man, and she prepared herself to find that his little daughter was conceited and disagreeable.

There is often as much, if not more pride in connection with a patched linsey than with a silk or velvet dress, but Faith, like many people, imagined that money always makes those who have

it vain. She need not have feared that Ethel would despise her because she was poor.

Besides, the pleasant surprise she had already had about her aunt Margaret should have taught her to be more hopeful. A mother could scarcely have greeted her child more tenderly than Margaret welcomed Faith when Philip brought her to the door. Margaret was not a person of many words; there was no gushing sentimentality about her, but the loving kiss, the warm pressure of the hand, and the soothing tone in which she spoke, went at once to Faith's heart, and gave her that restful, at-home sort of feeling which it is so difficult to describe, but so delightful to possess.

The table was spread as usual for tea, for Margaret did not think that putting on the best china tea-service and teapot, which was used for occasional guests, was any compliment to one who was to be a member of the family; but there were new-laid eggs and cold ham set before the young traveller, and one or two dishes of freshly gathered fruit, and a glass basin full of various-tinted roses, made all look bright and pretty.

And to a city-bred girl there was something delightfully pure and fresh in the air and in the new scenery around her. Why, the white paint of the room and the gay paper on the wall seemed as if they must have been put on yesterday; there was not a speck to be seen anywhere! And Margaret herself, with her smooth brown hair, her rosy cheeks, and her snowy collar and apron, looked as fresh and charming as one of her own daisies.

Faith could not but be pleased with her new home and its inmates. And yet, though the farm was far better than the dingy lodging in which she had lived with her mother, where there was little to be seen from the window besides chimney-pots, I believe Faith would have given everything she had to find herself at that moment back again in Mrs. Simpson's smoke-dried dwelling in London.

Her aunt, it is true, was very kind—much kinder than Faith had dared to hope she would be; still, she might not always remain so, and even if she did, the kindest aunt could never be to her what her mother had been.

And Faith had loved her mother so dearly! The tears *would* come into her eyes, in spite of all her efforts to prevent them, as she sat quietly in the easy chair watching Margaret cutting up the crisp loaf, and spreading the golden-hued butter on the slices.

Margaret saw the tears, but she was too wise to notice them; she made some commonplace remarks to Faith without looking at her, and she was glad when the entrance of Ethel necessarily changed the current of Faith's thoughts.

At the first glance Faith thought, "Oh, how nice she looks! she will never care for *me*." For Ethel, in her pink muslin with its frills and flounces and fluttering ribbons, and in her broad hat with its waving feather, was a very different little girl from *any* with whom Faith had hitherto come in contact. *She had seen such at church*, or passing along the street, but she had never even spoken to one of them.

Her fears were, however, soon dispelled when Ethel went towards her, and said, in a frank, pleasant manner,—

"I am so glad to see you, Faith. Have you ever been here before? No? Oh, you will like it so much, I am sure you will; it's a lovely place, isn't it, Philip?"

Philip smiled, and said,—

"Of course, *I* think so, Miss Ethel, but tastes differ, you know. Some of our great men have preferred the crowded streets of London to any other spot."

"I am sorry for them, that's all," said Ethel, merrily, as she took the chair which Philip placed for her.

It was not easy for anybody to be dull where Ethel was—that is, if she felt free to talk, and she tried on this occasion to say all that she thought would interest Faith, for she could not help observing that the new-comer looked very pale and depressed. Ethel was kind-hearted, and she pitied the poor girl who had so lately lost her mother.

Faith sat listening to the conversation in a dreamy way, as if it did not much concern her; and she started and coloured when Ethel addressed a question to her; but when she had answered it, and the ice was thus broken, Faith presently found herself talking to Ethel with as much freedom as if she had known her for years.

And when the two girls were left by themselves for a little while, Ethel asked Faith about her home in London; whether she had lived near the parks; if she had often seen the Queen, and how many times she had been to St. Paul's, for Ethel had only been once or twice to the great city, and thought it a most wonderful place.

Faith answered her questions, and was then drawn on to speak about her mother, and the happy years she had spent with her; and she told Ethel much more about her own feelings and fears in coming to the farm than she had as yet told any one else.

"Oh, you will be very happy here; I know you will," said Ethel, confidently. "Your uncle and aunt are so kind to everybody, that I am sure they will be to you."

"But I miss mother so!" said Faith, sorrowfully.

"I miss mamma dreadfully, so I understand a little how you must feel," replied Ethel; "but then your loss is worse than mine, because I expect to see mamma again some day."

"And I shall see mother again, only not just yet," said Faith. "She'll be watching and looking out for me in heaven till I go to her."

"But you must wait a great many years for that."

"Perhaps not; I am not strong, and I often think that I may not live very long. Anyhow, I *shall* see mother again; if I wasn't certain of that I believe my heart would just break."

Such a bright look came over Faith's face as she was speaking that Ethel was astonished at it. It was natural Faith should like the idea of meeting her mother again, but that she should look forward so comfortably to the thought of dying, and of going to heaven, was more than Ethel could understand. She did not, however, express any surprise to Faith, for she considered that it was very likely the proper way in which to talk after losing a near relative. She recollected Mr. Cleveland speaking in rather the same style to her papa and mamma when dear little Charlie died, so she supposed that this was the correct sort of remark to make on such occasions.

## Chapter XIV.—Showing how Faith came by her Name.

Faith got up the next morning in better spirits. The bright sunshine streamed in through the lightly curtained window, making the simple little room look very pleasant and cosy.

Such a contrast to Faith's home in Paradise Row! There, do what you would to get the place clean, you could hardly keep free of dust and smoke; and the house, in spite of incessant scrubbing, wore a forlorn and yet a resigned aspect, which seemed to say, "I am very sorry, but I really cannot help it; the floors are so old, the walls are so faded, and the ceiling is so begrimed, that it is impossible for me to put on a more cheerful countenance."

But here, at aunt Margaret's, the snowy bed furniture, and the white-frilled dressing-table, panes of glass that you could actually see through, and boards that you might have eaten off of, were charming sights to the eyes of the little Londoner.

To be sure, the room was very small—a narrow piece, in fact, partitioned off aunt Margaret's; but then Faith was not very big, and it was nice to have a place all to herself, that she could call her own, for Faith liked sometimes to be alone. She wanted to be able to read her Bible night and morning, and to pray in secret to that Father who seeth in secret, and who rewardeth openly; for Faith could no more do without spiritual than without natural food.

And she felt that she should stand especially in need of it at the farm; for, kind and cordial as her uncle and aunt were, Faith missed in them the tone of piety to which she had been accustomed in her mother, and she could not but know, from the remarks which uncle Philip had sometimes made to her mother, that he was not seeking *first* the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

But the Good Shepherd always takes care of the lambs of His flock, and leads them in green pasture and beside still waters; so that Faith was as safe in her new home as she had been in her mother's sheltering love.

Ethel was very glad that Faith had come to the farm. Children like each other's society, and though Faith was older than Ethel, yet she was so shy and so simple in many of her ways, that she really did not appear so. And she had been so well and so carefully brought up by her mother, who, though not a lady, was a person of great natural refinement, that she was not an unsuitable companion for the little lady from the hall.

And Faith, in her turn, was equally pleased with Ethel. There was a freshness and brightness about Ethel that just supplied the want in Faith's graver disposition. So they were helpful to each other.

"What a curious name yours is, Faith! who chose it?" asked Ethel, as she was walking with her in the garden and orchard.

"It was my father's choice," said Faith, smiling. "Mother and he were in great trouble soon after I was born. Father had lost his situation; lost it, not through any fault of his, but through a false charge that was made against him. Some money was missing in the office, and one of the clerks said that father must have stolen it."

"How shameful!" cried Ethel. "What did your father do?"

"He could not do anything; he was supposed to have been the last person left in the room with it, and he could not *prove* that he had not taken it."

"So he lost his situation?"

"Yes, but he soon got it back, for it was all found out; and—what do you think?—the very man that laid the blame on father was the one who had really stolen the money!"

"Just what I expected! When I am reading a story I know it will all come right in the end."

"I don't think it always comes right in people's lives," said Faith, doubtfully. "However, it did in father's, and he said he hoped he should never doubt God's goodness any more."

"But what had that to do with your name?"

"Father had me christened Faith for two reasons; one that he might always be reminded of God's goodness to him in his trouble, and might learn to trust Him better."

"And the other?"

"That I might have a name I was to try to grow up to. I mean father hoped that I should be a Christian."

"But we are all Christians, aren't we?" said Ethel.

"Yes, in one sense, because we live in a Christian country, and are given up to God when we are little babies, but that is not enough," said Faith. "We can't be *real* Christians unless we trust in Jesus ourselves, and give Him our hearts."

"That sounds just like a book, Faith! or like a bit of Mr. Cleveland's sermon."

"Sermons are very good sometimes," said Faith, with a smile.

"Not on week-days, and not out of church," answered Ethel. "Oh, I must tell you about Aline, she added quickly.

"Who is Aline?"

"A little gipsy girl that I met with the other day."

"A real gipsy girl! Oh, how I should like to see one!"

"You will be sure to do that if you live here; there are always a good many gipsies about in the summer and autumn."

"I have such a nice gipsy story at home—in my box, I mean," said Faith, correcting herself, "and since I read that I have wanted so to see some of them."

"It was our talking about names that reminded me of Aline," said Ethel, "for she did not know what I meant when I asked her what her *Christian* name was."

"I believe they are very ignorant," said Faith.

"Aline certainly was; I don't suppose she could read, or had ever been into a church."

"What a pity!"

"Yes, she was such a bright child; I should fancy she would soon learn anything."

"Had she black eyes and hair, and an olive complexion?"

"Oh yes, she was a proper gipsy," said Ethel, laughing; "very pretty—handsome, I expect she would be called, and as full of fun as she could be. I took quite a fancy to her."

"She is not here now, then?"

"No, her people left one morning in a great hurry. They had done something wrong, perhaps, and wanted to get away. Aline had promised me some wild flowers the evening before, and she left them with Margaret between five and six o'clock, that I might not be disappointed."

"That was kind and thoughtful of her."

"She is a warm-hearted little thing, I think, and very affectionate, though you would not suppose so at first, because she is rough and off-hand in her manner. But when I asked her about her mother, who died when she was a baby, she cried for a few minutes as if she could not stop herself."

Directly Ethel had said this she longed to recall her words, for Faith looked ready to cry too, and turned her head away and looked out of the window.

"Oh, Faith, I am so sorry!" she exclaimed. "I forgot about you."

"Never mind; it is very foolish of me," answered Faith, smiling through her tears. "I think I should like Aline, from your description of her."

"Well, I dare say she will be back again before very long; at all events, when the hop-picking is over. The gipsies are always coming and going in these parts."

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## Chapter XV.—Aline goes to Church.

Little Aline would have been pleased, had she known that she was remembered and talked about at the farm. For though she had not forgotten Ethel, she did not suppose that Miss Raymond would care to think of the little gipsy girl, or would feel any further interest in her.

Where was Aline now? At Cloverly, where the *fair was to be held.* The small town was in a state of great bustle and excitement. The exhibitors had got their stalls and booths ready, and the flaming red and yellow caravans that had arrived were very attractive to the boys and girls who thronged the place, and watched all the proceedings with the deepest attention.

There was plenty of amusement provided for the eager sight-seers. A giant, who was big and ugly enough to frighten little children; a dwarf, who called himself Tom Thumb's brother, and shook hands most affably with all his visitors; a fat woman, who was more remarkable than agreeable-looking; and a conjuror, who made and cooked a pancake in a man's hat, and stamped a watch to pieces which was afterwards found uninjured in Farmer Burton's pocket; these were some of the entertainments provided at a reasonable cost, which placed them within everybody's reach.

There was not any harm, if there was not much sense, in these things; but some of the performances were of a more objectionable character, and brought young persons into scenes of temptation, from which they did not always escape without harm. And at most fairs and shows there is generally so much drink and bad language going on that the respectable inhabitants do not like to frequent them.

Little Aline was shielded by the habits of her companions from some of the evils around her. The gipsies kept themselves rather separate from the other performers. Some of them had stalls of gingerbread, sweets, and toys; others hawked things for sale up and down the fair; but fortune-telling and singing were the women's chief work. Aline, as she had herself said to Ethel, had a fine though untrained voice, and the wild, plaintive melodies that she sang were eagerly listened to by the simple country folks. Her sprightly manners and her good looks made her a favourite with them, and she earned a good bit of money for herself and "Tim" during the three days which the fair lasted.

Aline's aunt did her duty, as far as she knew it, by her little niece. She was a decent, moral woman; and though Aline did not get much sympathy from her, she kept the child ignorant of much of the wrong-doing that went on about her, and would not allow her to be in bad company. Aline was, perhaps, as pure-minded a child as those who live in rich and happier homes.

It was not, of course, the best sort of life that could have been led. It is never well for a little girl to sing or do anything for show in public; it destroys much of that sweet modesty which is her greatest ornament. Nor was she likely to grow up industrious and useful. The wandering, unsettled ways of the gipsies make them live, as the saying is, from hand to mouth. Sometimes they are busy, sometimes unemployed; sometimes earning plenty of money, at others almost in want of food; and thus inclined to be both improvident and wasteful.

The fair was, of course, over by Sunday. It

was a rest-day for the tired showmen, stall-keepers, and fortune-tellers. The gipsies lay in their tents or on the grass, alternately smoking and eating. Aline was free to go whither she liked, and to do what she liked. Ralph had set off nutting and blackberrying with some other boys; at least, these were the professed objects of their expeditions; but it is possible that they had secret plans of their own in addition, for Ralph refused to let Aline go with them, and he was generally willing that she should share his amusements.

Feeling rather dull by herself—for one or two of the girls who were usually her playfellows were visiting another gipsy encampment—Aline strolled into the town to look at the church and chapel going people, and to admire or to find fault, as the case might be, with their gay dresses. As she passed a large grand-looking church, she involuntarily stopped at the sound of the organ which came faintly from between the closed doors; and presently, in order to hear it more distinctly, she crept inside the porch, and put her ear to the door. Entranced by the music, she forgot where she was, and leaned so heavily against the panel, that a man from inside, opening the door hastily, threw her off her balance, and she would have fallen to the ground if she had not clutched a projection of the wall, and so saved herself. Being startled, she gave a little scream, and some of the congregation turned their heads in that direction; and the beadle, vexed at the disturbance, said angrily, "What mischief were you up to here? Get along directly!"

He laid his hand on Aline's shoulder, and was about to hasten her departure; but she pushed him away, and with a temper as quick as his own, retorted,—

"You've no business to touch me; I'm not going to get along for you."

"Hold your tongue!" he said, more quietly; for Aline had raised her voice to a high pitch, and some late comers were walking briskly up the path.

"My tongue is my own," said Aline, unconsciously quoting the words of Scripture, "and I shall say what I choose without your leave!"

"What is the matter, little girl? what do you want?" said a mild-looking lady, as she came hurriedly into the porch.

"I want to go inside to hear the music," said Aline, boldly.

The lady looked at the beadle, and the beadle looked at the lady.

"It won't do to have her in, ma'am," he said, "she don't know how to behave herself; and Mr. Bertram complains if I let children come bothering into the church."

"Mr. Bertram's *Master* says, 'Suffer little children to come unto Me,'" replied the lady, gently; "I don't think *He* would like this little one shut out. Open the door, Peters, if you please; I will see that she is quiet."

The man obeyed the order, for the lady was a seat-holder and wealthy, but he did not do it at all graciously.

Aline gave him a triumphant look as she followed her new friend. She sat perfectly still during the service, though her eyes wandered incessantly; but when at the close the lady glanced towards the free seats, the little gipsy girl had already left the church.

## THE PHANTOM ISLANDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ENCHANTED OVEN."

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

CELIA had scarcely had time to recover from the effects of her jump, and to discover that the soft something on which she stood was neither moss nor snow, nor cotton-wool, but a substance which might best be described as an airy nothing, when she saw the individual coming up whom the captain had pointed out from the steamer.

At first sight she thought him quite a pretty little boy, with fair hair, a clear complexion, and blue eyes; and she had just said to herself, "He's very like the boy doll aunt Margaret gave me," when he changed, quite disappointingly, Celia thought; in fact, he seemed a young man instead of a boy, and was dark and pleasant-looking, but not at all what he had looked at first. Then he began to change most wonderfully, just like a transformation scene; his hair became light, and then dark, and then light again, and his legs and arms and body expanded and contracted like a telescope.

"I wish you'd make up your mind what you mean to be," she said, pettishly, "there's no knowing how to speak to you while you change so much!"

"Well, it's very fine blaming me for what is your own fault," said the figure, "you made me, and I can't help it if I'm unfinished."

"I made you!" said Celia in great astonishment, "what do you mean, who are you?"

"Don't you remember. I'm your phantom brother, you made me partly when you had your doll, and wished you had a little brother like it, then you wished you had a grown-up brother like the little Percys, and then you wished for a brother your own age. Sometimes you were glad when you saw unkind or cross brothers that you hadn't one. It was a great pity for me that you didn't know your own mind, but at any rate I'm your brother and you're my sister."

The poor phantom changed more and more quickly every moment, and Celia felt dreadfully ashamed that her changeableness had given him such an uncomfortable existence; for she felt it must be very uncomfortable never to be certain what he was. If only she had known her own mind! She asked with a sigh,—

"Would it do any good if I wished very hard that you might be one sort of brother now?"

"I'm afraid not, but you can try!"

However, Celia found it quite impossible to wish for one thing. If the phantom had remained stationary only for a minute it would have been different, but no sooner had Celia made up her mind to one brother than the figure changed, and so did her wishes.

"Never mind," said the phantom kindly, "it can't be helped, and everything changes here, I'm no worse off than my neighbours. Now you have not very long to be here, so what would you like to see first?"

"What is there to see?" asked Celia.

"There's the island of unfinished day dreams, and the island of fulfilled hopes, (but that is the smallest of the islands) and the island of self-admiration. This is the island of unfinished day dreams; is there any one's day dreams you would like to see?"

"Oh, yes, I should like to see papa's, I know he has one!"

She had hardly expressed the wish when before her there rose a large and handsome house in the Elizabethan style, with beautiful trees and gardens round it. Celia and her brother tried to get in by the door which was open, but all their efforts were in vain, for the simple reason that neither doors nor windows ever remained in the same position, now the door was in the middle of the house, now at one end or another, but never at the spot at which Celia found herself. The windows opened on to the lawn one moment and were far above the ground the next, the very position of the house kept changing,—now north, now east, now west."

"It is most unsatisfactory!" said Celia, who was very fond of using long words, and as one of her aunts had once said in a provoked tone to Mrs. Cameron, "almost always used them rightly, so it was difficult to find fault with her." "We shall never have a house at all if papa goes on changing his mind like this.—No, thank you," as her brother was about to make another drive at the door, "I don't care to try any more, I should like to see mamma's day-dreams?"

"Those I cannot show you," said the phantom rather sadly, "it would take us to an island which I can neither see nor visit; an island not in these seas, but in the golden sea of heaven, of which at sunset you sometimes catch the reflection. You may see them at times, the shadowy outlines of distant islands and mountains standing in a transparent lake of gold. That is the land of holy dreams and wishes, where the dreams are garnered of those whose wishes have been all for the service of the Highest, whose brightest hopes have been to gather in wanderers to the fold, to tend the sick, to cheer the sorrowful; and amongst these are treasured the sacred wishes of mothers for those for whose souls they pray with trembling, that they may be kept pure and free from sin. This is *only the island of earthly longings and desires, and beyond it I, and such as I, cannot live.*"

"Oh that I could visit the island of holy dreams!" sighed Celia.

"Desire nothing then but what is the noblest and highest!" said the phantom, and he began as he spoke to change even more wonderfully than he had done before; his face sometimes took the appearance of Celia's mother, then of her father, then of her nurse, then of all together.

Suddenly the island, her phantom brother and Celia, seemed sinking down thousands of miles; she closed her eyes in terror, and gave a sharp cry.

At the same moment a hand was placed gently on her head. The child opened her eyes; she was lying in her own little bed at Rivière du Loup, and beside it stood her mother, with a pale and anxious face.

"Where am I, mamma? What is the matter?" asked Celia in a voice which frightened her, it was so weak and low.

"Thank God you are better, darling, but you have been very ill, you must not talk now, but eat this and go to sleep."

After she had taken the nourishment Mrs. Cameron gave her, Celia soon fell asleep, and when she woke up again the fever had left her.

Still it was many days before she learnt how she had fallen asleep under the bush by the shore, and it had brought on brain fever.

It was long before she was strong enough to talk much, but as soon as she was she told her mother her strange dream about the Phantom Islands. "I know now, mamma, why you did not think day dreams safe or wholesome, I will always try to have such day dreams as may be garnered in the Sunset Islands."

## BURIED RIVERS.

1. The glass made everything look green.
2. Is Islington so far from here?
3. How is Arthur doing his work?
4. Margaret rent her dress badly.
5. I have twenty nearly finished.
6. Were the girls ever naughty.
7. Some used to come here daily.
8. He opened the window and leapt out.
9. I do not like myrrh in every garden.
10. I have a purse in each hand.
11. Use the shovel before he comes.
12. I can hear nothing at all.

## ENIGMA.

My first is in stool, but not in chair;
My second's in plum, but not in pear;
My third is in fawn, but not in deer;
My fourth is in smile, but not in tear;
My fifth is in whole, and also in half;
My sixth is in tie, but not in scarf;
My seventh's in green, but not in blue;
My eighth is in one, but not in two.
My whole is the name of a friend of my own,
A nicer, I think, you'll hardly have known.

*Aberdeen.* FLORA ALEXANDRA M.

## A BIBLE EXERCISE.

A PROPHET whose name signified "comforted of Jehovah," is indicated by the initials of the following Scripture characters:—

1. A prophet in the reign of David, the meaning of whose name was "given."

2. A prophet whose name signified "My God Jehovah."

3. A prophet, the son of Beeri, and first of the minor prophets in the English Bible.

4. A prophet whose name signified "God the deliverer."

5. A prophet whose name means "who as Jehovah," son of Imlah.

6. A prophet whose name signified "the salvation of the Lord."

7. A prophet of the Lord who dwelt at Shiloh, and foretold the death of a prince.

8. A prophet, one of the twelve minor prophets, and the eighth in order in the Bible.

JESSIE B.

*Islington.*

## HELPFUL HARRY; OR, BEAR ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS.

SOLUTION OF THE EIGHTY-SEVENTH PICTURE STORY.

EAGERLY did little Harry Webster entreat all passers by to have their muddy and dirty boots well blackened by his ready and experienced hand. Not many could have withstood such an earnest appeal, for who had a pleasanter face than Harry? He always had a smile and a helping hand for every one, and he *did* look as nice a boy as one could wish to see, as he stood with his shoe-brush in his hand, his arm stretched out as if to implore the crowd that passed him to help and pity an orphan, though not friendless boy. Before him stood his shoe box, but, alas! no kindly foot found its way there, and Harry felt very much inclined to give up in despair, when a gentleman with a large umbrella, in case of rain, came up and put his foot on the shoe-box, saying in a cheery voice,

"Now my boy, look sharp and clean my boots well and quickly, for I am in a hurry."

There was no need to give Harry a second bidding; he was quickly down on his knees, and very soon the gentleman's boots were cleaned well and quickly. While he was doing so Mr. Baines (that was the gentleman's name) asked him about his former life, and what he was doing at present. Harry's tale was soon told. When quite little his father died, leaving his wife and little boy to struggle on as best they could, and this they did for a few years, but at last Mrs. Webster's strength entirely failed her, and a few weeks since she had been laid beneath the green turf, and Harry had wandered about the streets an uncared-for orphan, until at last he sunk down on a heap of old shells and dirt, and, cold and hungry, fell asleep, and awoke to find himself in a warm bed, and the kind face of Mr. F—— bending over him, for he had been picked up by Mr. F—— and taken into that excellent home for poor orphan boys; and now Harry was trying all he could to get some more money to help his kind benefactor in the noble work he was doing, so Harry went out shoe blacking nearly all the daytime.

This, then, was Harry's tale, and Mr. Baines thought it was an exceedingly interesting one, and with almost tears in his eyes he gave Harry something to help towards Mr. F——'s Home.

Mr. Baines had not been gone long before Harry saw a timid little girl half crying with fright, wondering how she would ever get across the crossing, with a little bag in her hand. She was standing near Harry, and he, seeing her, said, "Never mind, miss, I will help you across;" and leaving both shoe-box and brush behind him, he was quickly at her side, and it was not long before his helpful hand had helped her safely on to the other side, and after thanking the very useful boy for his timely aid, she went on her way. Then Harry came back to his shoe-box.

Near where Harry always stood there was a fruit-stall, kept by "cross old Betty Lea," and while Harry was walking back to his place he heard her voice breaking out in angry and hot wrath. Looking towards her he saw the whole scene. On the ground by her stall was a basket and apples rolling about everywhere, and then his eye caught sight of a little boy running away, quite delighted with the unkind trick he had played on Betty Lea, who was shouting at the top of her voice,

"How dare you play them there pranks on a poor woman like me, who never spoke an ill word to no one? I'll tell you what it is, if you play them tricks on me any more I'll send the police after you; you are worse than a barking dog, that you be" (dogs always delighted to bark at Betty, so she thought that would be the worst thing she could call the boy).

But Betty was not to be unanswered; the boy, as soon as he had heard Betty's opinion of him, quickly replied, "Bravo, missis! well done for an old un who never spoke an ill word to no one! to-morrow, if you likes, I'll turn your apples over again for you; ha! ha!" and with this kind offer he rushed away, as discretion told him it would be best to do, for by this time Betty's rage was at its highest, and she shook her fist at him and shouted something after him, which he didn't hear, as he was running away as fast as he could, saying to himself, "My! ain't she angry just!"

Harry, seeing and hearing all this, was quickly at the old woman's stall, and he picked up her apples and replaced them in the basket, while Betty was gracious enough to remark, "Well, you are a good un; I wish more boys were like you, then poor old people like me wouldn't suffen as we do, that would be a comfort. Thank you kindly." And I am sure Harry must have been much happier for the little works of service he had that day rendered.

That night, as he was going into the "Boys' Refuge," he saw his friend Mr. Baines, who asked him how he would like a place as clerk in a banker's office. Harry was so very much delighted, and he answered quickly, "Oh yes, sir,

if I may." Mr. Baines smiled and said, "Well, then, take this letter to the head of Barring and Co., and say I sent you." Henry said, "Thank you, sir," and they then parted.

The next morning Harry was soon at the door of this large bank, and he knocked and asked to see the head of the bank. He soon found himself before that gentleman, and he delivered the letter and waited the answer. It was not long in coming, for his new master said, "Well, you may try, and if you get on well I will keep you;" and Harry in a short time found himself at a large desk with papers before him, which he was busily copying. One night when he went home to the "Boys' Refuge" he found some one waiting for him, to ask him to come and see old Betty Lea, who was dying, and wished to see him before she died. Harry went at once, and was soon at her bedside, when he was startled to see how ill she was. She asked him to read to her out of the "Book," and he sat down by the bed, and with a large Bible on his knees he read to her, and nearly every day he did so until at length she died; and she blessed Harry for reading to her, for almost her last words were, "Oh tell him that I have found peace."

One day the postman brought Harry a letter. It was from a lawyer, to say that Betty Lea was dead, and she had left him a legacy of five hundred pounds. "Could it be true?" he asked himself. Yes it *was* true. Betty was one of those who took a delight in hoarding, and no one could have guessed she had so much money belonging to her. That day Mr. Baines came to congratulate Harry on his good fortune, and he clasped Harry's hand and said, "I am indeed glad you should have such a blessing." Harry could do nothing but smile with joy while he held the paper that told him of his riches in his hand. Harry, through this money, became at last one of the partners of the firm, and when he grew to be a rich man Mr. F——'s Home was not forgotten. Harry would often say, "If it had not been for Mr. F—— and Mr. Baines, where should I be now?" But was it not also owing to his own kindness and helpfulness that he had become, from a ragged street boy, a rich and benevolent man? And we can but hope that all children will follow in Harry's steps, and "be kind one to another."

FLORENCE B. C. (14).

*Brixham, South Devon.*

## PICTURE STORY.

### No. LXXXIX.

HONOURABLE MENTION.—Marie A. M., Bessie C. M. D., Edith S., Annie F. B., Geraldine K. K., Nelly M., Primrose, Jenny H., Catherine W. H. J., Ellen M. H. C. J., Kate B., Fanny E. H., Lilias D., Elsie T., Susan G., Alice A. H. T., Lydia L., Minnie R., Jessie K., Lilian M. M., Amy M. B., Florence D. S., Lillie W. D., Ethel L. M., Mary Ann S. E., Alice B. B., Clara R., Annie E. W., Edith B. S., Alice P., Lilla M. T., Edith M. L., Madeline F. J., Marian E. P., Ethel M. J., Ada W., Rose A. L., Clara A. W., Mary A. H., Harriet A. C., Edith A. S., Ada C. H., Clara B. R., Edith M. S., Martha L., Pollie S., Florence E. R., Alice W., Jeanie E. L., Katie B., Ellie R. D., Mary H. G., Mary R. R., Sarah M., Maude P., Alice M. J., Amelia D.; Nemone B., Robert C., Henry W., Frank L. P., Frederick W. P., Echo, Cecil G. W. R., William M., Lynx.

Solutions should be sent not later than the eighth of the month, addressed to the Editor, at 24, Paternoster Row, London.

[ARNOLD'S VISIT TO THE NURSERY.]

## AUNT MILLICENT'S CHARGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SOLDIER HAROLD," &C.

### CHAPTER X.—THE LOST PENCIL CASE.

"WHAT can Miss Grey have been thinking of, to send a child like you into this nursery? I wonder what good you can do?" was nurse's greeting to little Martha Bird when she presented herself at the vicarage and was taken up to nurse's domain, feeling herself rather strange and frightened, for nurse was a much more formidable person in her estimation than Miss Grey.

"Please, ma'am, I will do my best," she answered, in a shy, timid voice.

"Don't ma'am me, silly child! you will be more trouble than profit, I reckon."

"Please, Mrs. Nurse, Miss Grey said I was to wait on *Miss Agatha, for one thing.*"

"Oh, that's it, is it? If I had my way, Miss Agatha should be made to wait on herself; she is old enough and strong enough now. But come into her room; I dare say you will find plenty to do, for she is a very untidy young lady."

And truly Agatha's room needed setting to rights. She had just come in from a stroll on the sands, and her walking garments were strewed about on floor and chairs, and the contents of two drawers had been turned out in search of things, and left for somebody else to right.

Martha's deft little fingers soon straightened up one thing after another, and laid them in their places. Nurse watched her for a minute, and then left her with the inward remark, "She'll do."

Millicent had tried to enlist nurse's sympathies for little Martha, but without much success; for nurse, like many more people, had a will of her own, and she had no liking to be troubled with

such a child as that; and though she did not say anything, she was set against Martha before she came. But she was forced to admit to herself, if to no one else, that Miss Grey had not been far wrong in her judgment.

Martha was at every one's call, and made herself generally useful. The two little children soon loved her, and tyrannized over her to their heart's content; for she was always ready to do anything they wanted.

But Martha soon began to dread Arnold's visits to the nursery. Perhaps Arnold had learnt from his new companions contempt for girls in general; however that may be, he seemed to consider that it was quite lawful and proper to tease Martha as much as he liked; indeed, he seemed to think she was there for that especial purpose. Once he sent her quite to the end of the garden for something he was supposed to have left there; and when, after a quarter of an hour's useless search, she came back again, Arnold had vanished, and she had to bear nurse's scolding, for having left her work so long. Needles, cotton, and sometimes even the sewing she was engaged upon, would disappear in an unaccountable manner; and nurse would chide her for her carelessness, and declare over and over again that she knew how it would be; she wished Miss Grey had never brought her there to bother her. Once when Martha ventured to suggest that somebody did it for mischief, nurse stopped her directly by saying, "Did she think the young gentlemen would trouble themselves about such as her? No indeed! it was her own carelessness; and if she did not take care she would lose her place."

So poor Martha had nothing for it but to bear in silence whatever Arnold chose to do. She would not have complained to Miss Grey, who was very kind to her; and the happiest time little Martha had was when Millicent took her into her room to talk to her.

Agatha was rather exacting towards her little maiden; she always preferred having things done for her to doing them herself; and Martha was often in request to fetch and carry things from one room to another, or perhaps to run upstairs three or four times in half an hour for some trifling article that Agatha had forgotten.

"I think you might have gone for that yourself, Agatha," said Millicent one day; "or at any rate you should try not to give more trouble than necessary. I shall be sorry if Martha's coming makes you lazy and inconsiderate."

"I thought Martha's business was to wait on me, aunt Millicent?"

"Yes, my dear, always when you really want her, but not to save you from the inconvenience of your own carelessness."

"Martha is papa's servant,"—and therefore mine, though not added in words was plainly to be read in Agatha's manner as she turned away. Aunt Millicent was interfering a little too much, she thought.

A slight sigh, scarcely above her breath, came from Millicent; but the weight at her heart was a heavy one. These children—her responsible charge—were growing almost beyond her: she could only rule them by love, and love upon Agatha seemed to have but little effect. Her brother was scarcely any help to her; he took very little notice of the children, unless a very flagrant act of misconduct came under his eyes; then his rebuke was so grave, yet so gentle, that the offender was sorry beyond measure for having grieved him. But he was too much engrossed with the cares of his people to see the little daily faults that troubled his sister so much.

Millicent often longed for the valuable counsel and sympathy of her kind friend Mrs. Graham, but that was denied her at present except by letter. But she had an unfailing Friend to whom each little care and worry was carried the instant it arose, and in general she was calm and quiet, though the incessant thought and anxiety was gradually wearing away the roundness of her cheek, had there been any eye sufficiently observant to notice it. For Millicent was still quite young, and under happier circumstances would have been under the guardianship of loving parents yet.

Agatha's education had been considerably interrupted during her frequent attacks of illness; but when she was able she studied diligently under her aunt's superintendence. Her lessons were a delight to her, or at least most of them, and she was very sorry when her health prevented her from pursuing them; but even when obliged to lie most of the day on the sofa, a book was an unfailing source of amusement to her,—not, it must be confessed, *always* a lesson book. But nurse was once heard to say that it was a matter of great thankfulness that Miss Agatha did care for reading; for if she had been obliged to do nothing, her impatience and irritability would have been past bearing.

Now, however, that she was so much better, there was real hard work to be done; and aunt Millicent would allow of no holidays and no idling, nor did Agatha wish it. What was Millicent's surprise, then, on entering the schoolroom one morning, to find nothing ready; no books on the table, and no Agatha!

In answer to her call Agatha came flying downstairs at a speed that bid fair to bring her to the bottom more quickly than she expected. Her cheeks were flushed and her eyes flashing; clearly something more than common had happened to excite her.

"Gently, Agatha," said Millicent: "remember your back is not strong yet; a slight twist or strain will make it as bad as ever again if you are not careful."

"I don't care if it does!" burst from Agatha. "It is a shame, a horrid big shame, that it is!"

"What is? what is the matter?"

"Why, aunt Millicent, somebody has taken my pretty gold pencil-case that Bertha Ramsden gave me just before we left Willington. I can't find it

anywhere, and I did value it so much. I promised Bertha to keep it always for her sake, and now it is gone!"

And Agatha stopped to recover breath; for what with excitement, and what with grief for her loss, she was really overset, and the tears stood in her eyes.

"Where ought it to be?" Millicent asked.

"In a little box in my drawer, the left-hand top drawer in my room. I know quite well where it ought to be, aunt Millicent; but the thing is, it isn't there. I have been looking for it half an hour, and can't find it anywhere."

"When had you it last?"

"Yesterday. I brought it down-stairs to copy a little piece out of that book we were reading; but I put it back again into its place."

"You remember doing so?"

Agatha looked annoyed.

"No, aunt Millicent," she answered impatiently, "I can't say that I remember; but I am quite sure I did. I should never leave a thing I value so much about for any one to use. Somebody must have taken it."

"No, dear, don't say that unless you are able to prove it. It is a serious charge to make, Agatha, if you have no more ground to go upon than what you have told me. Suppose you and I go and have another good search for it. I have no doubt we shall find it."

"Oh no, aunt Millicent," said Agatha, coldly. "Please don't say any more about it. I must bear my loss as well as I can, I suppose. I would rather do my lesson; it is past the time for beginning."

And she went to the bookshelf, took down her books, and seated herself at the table with a most injured air.

Millicent said nothing; she had learnt by experience that when Agatha was in those moods, talking to her only made her worse. So the French verbs which Agatha was to learn were marked out for her in silence, and then Millicent left the room.

She went at once to Agatha's room, determined to search for herself for the missing article. It was no wonder that things were lost, Millicent thought; everything was in such disorder. The drawers were tidied every week regularly, but were as bad as ever again in a day or two; and Millicent resolved that for the future Agatha should tidy them herself, and then perhaps there might be some hope of their keeping straight.

The little box was there as Agatha had said, but there was no pencil-case; nor was it to be seen anywhere about the room. The dining and drawing rooms were searched with no better success; and Millicent was obliged reluctantly to give it up for the present, and return to the school-room.

Agatha's lessons were but imperfectly done that morning, for she could not give them undivided attention; but it was not until the last was repeated, and the books closed and put away, that Millicent turned to her and said,—

"This has not been a very happy morning, Agatha."

"No, indeed it has not, auntie," was the frank answer. "I am so vexed about my loss that I can hardly think of anything else."

"If I were in your place, I think I know whom I should be vexed with."

"Oh, do you, auntie? I do wish you would tell me."

"With a certain young lady who lets her possessions get into such disorder that she can never find anything when it is wanted."

"What, myself? but I really don't think it is my fault this time. But I will be the pick of tidiness if only I find my dear Bertha's gift again; you shall see I will, auntie."

"I wish you would really try, Agatha. Such careless habits are very bad in one of your age; besides, your things don't last half so long as they would if they had proper care. And you are quite well enough now to be able to make some improvement in these untidy ways."

"Oh, I'll keep the drawers quite straight some time," answered Agatha, carelessly. "But what I want now is to find my pencil-case. It cannot have jumped out of the box, you know, auntie, and walked away, therefore somebody must have taken it."

"I don't think that follows, by any means, Agatha. And I suppose you do not suspect any one in particular?"

"No."

But Agatha's no was rather hesitatingly spoken. If she had said what she thought it would have been "Martha." But she knew quite well that her aunt would not listen to any suspicion without more proof than Agatha could give; indeed, she was perfectly aware that she had not the slightest proof; nothing to go upon but her own fancies, and these she kept to herself.

"Very well," said aunt Millicent, "I will make inquiries about it, and I have no doubt in a day or two your missing property will turn up."

Agatha was not so sure of this.

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## Chapter XI.—Found—but where!

But Agatha preferred making her own inquiry in her own fashion; and this was the manner of it.

"Martha, you have taken my pencil-case out of my drawer; but if you bring it me back just now uninjured, I will forgive you."

Martha looked bewildered.

"Why, miss, do you mean that pretty little thing you once showed me, and you said it was made of gold?"

"Yes; I was very foolish to show you it, but I thought you were honest, Martha. It has gone out of my drawer, and nobody but you can have taken it."

"Indeed, miss," said Martha, earnestly, with tears in her eyes, "I haven't seen it except that time; and you put it safe back in the cotton wool yourself. Why, what good could a little brittle thing like that do to me? My clumsy fingers would break it in a minute."

"Then you are quite sure you haven't got it?" questioned Agatha, in a disappointed tone.

"Quite, miss. I wouldn't have touched it for the world! Please don't think so bad of me as that, Miss Agatha. I'll look for it all over, and I make no doubt I shall find it soon."

"I have looked all over myself," said Agatha, with a sigh.

Agatha's next hope was that one of her brothers might have seen her missing property; and she waited impatiently for their return from school that she might ask them.

"I saw it laid on the little table in the drawing-room yesterday," said Johnnie, "but I thought you had left it there on purpose."

"Oh, I put it away after that," said Agatha, confidently. "I know I had it then, but it is since then I mean."

"I haven't seen it since then," said Johnnie.

"Did you put it away? that's all you know about it," said Arnold to himself; but he did not take any notice until Agatha turned to him with the same question.

"How should I know anything about your rubbishy pencil-cases? You should take better care of your things."

"Then you haven't seen it, Arnold?"

"No, then! so don't bother me any more about it!" was the impatient answer.

Agatha rather wondered that Arnold should be so cross about it, but she did not press the matter; she only said,—

"I am so sorry; I do wish I could find it!" and turned away with a deep sigh.

But where do you think the pencil-case was all the time? why, lying snugly at the bottom of Arnold's waistcoat pocket, though he had just said that he had not even seen it!

Arnold had found it lying on the floor; in fact, he had put his foot upon it the previous evening. He picked it up, intending to return it to his sister, with a reprimand for her carelessness in leaving it there, but he had quite forgotten all about it until he heard Agatha inquiring for it; and then he thought he would keep it a little longer to tease her; it would be a good joke to tell to Basil and Ernest, and it was quite safe with him. But he had not meant to tell an untruth about it; the "no" slipped out quite unawares, as it were, and he had not recalled it, and it was too late now. He could not bring himself to tell Agatha that he had her pencil-case all the time. Whether he ever should tell her he did not know, but certainly not then, for Arnold was beginning to share his companion's contempt for girls, and *to think that it* did not matter what he said or *did to them.*

All the same, the thing weighed upon his mind that evening: he wished he had left the pencil-case rolling on the floor where he had seen it, for any one to crush under their feet. Should he throw it down again just in the same place? but Arnold knew that the drawing-room had been well searched over and over again, and that every one would know that it could not have been overlooked lying there; and there might be inquiries which he could not, or would not, wish to answer. So he decided to do nothing at present, and drifted into evil merely from want of courage to confess his first wrong step.

Agatha made every one uncomfortable that evening. She was up and down, in and out of the room, and could not settle to anything for more than a few minutes together, until Mr. Grey, who was reading, looked up and said,—

"Agatha, my child, you disturb me; try to keep still. Have you nothing to do?—Cannot you give her some work for her restless fingers, Millicent?"

"Oh, I have plenty of work, papa, but I don't want to do it," exclaimed Agatha. "I have lost something very valuable, and I cannot be easy until I find it."

"What is it you have lost?"

Then Agatha, in her eager, impatient way, related to her father her loss and her unsuccessful search, ending with, "I'm afraid I shall never see Bertha's present again, papa, unless you will find out who has taken it. Do you think you can, papa?"

"I hope not, Agatha," was the quiet answer. "I hope you do not think that any one could be wicked enough deliberately to steal your pencil-case, do you?"

Agatha coloured, but said nothing. She could not deny that she had been thinking so; still less would she own to it.

"You must try and get rid of such unworthy suspicions, my child," said Mr. Grey, drawing her to him and kissing her. "Bear this little trial patiently, and I dare say in a few days it will be all right; but you must not make us all uncomfortable. Sit down and be quiet, and get something to do."

Agatha did not dare to disobey; she took some work from the table and went and sat in the window; but there was a cloud on her brow that Millicent was sorry to see there.

"Cheer up, Agatha," she whispered; "what can't be cured must be endured, you know."

"I am enduring," was the answer; and indeed she looked the picture of a would-be martyr.

Arnold had heard it all, but he never said a word. If he could not tell Agatha before, still less could he tell her now that his father knew about it. If only he had not told that story it would have been easy enough; but there, he had! so he never could confess what he had done. The only thing now would be to throw the pencil-case quite away, somewhere where no one could find it any more;

and by and by Agatha would forget all about it, and so should he; he would do it to-morrow.

But when the morrow came another idea suggested itself quite suddenly and unexpectedly to Arnold's imagination.

He ran up to the nursery for a few minutes before going to school as he usually did. Only the two little children were there, and they greeted Arnold with great glee, for his coming was always a signal for a game of romps. Eva climbed into his arms, and Hugh seized hold of a hand, and they began running up and down and round the room in a very noisy fashion. As they passed the table in their boisterous play, Hugh stumbled, and to save himself from falling, he caught hold of the table-cover; but he could not recover his balance, and came down on the floor with some violence, dragging the table-cover and whatever was on the table down with him.

Now it happened that at that particular moment there was standing on the table a little glass with some flowers in it that Millicent had brought for nurse out of the garden the day before; and nurse had put them into a little flower-glass that she prized very much, and set them on the chimney-piece. There was also Martha's workbox. Of course the flower-glass broke with its violent fall, and of course all the things came out of the box and were strewed about the floor.

Little Hugh began to cry; not so much because he was hurt as at the sight of the mischief he had done; and nurse and Martha came running from the night nursery to see what had happened. Arnold was busy picking up the reels of cotton and rolls of tape that were upon the floor, and putting them back into Martha's box, and as he did so he took the pencil case out of his waistcoat pocket, and managed unperceived to slip it into the bottom of the box.

Nurse held up her hands in indignation and dismay.

"Well, I never did! you really are the mischievousest children I ever did see, that you are! But it's always the way when you come into the nursery, Master Arnold. I have a good mind to ask Miss Grey to forbid you coming any more. What were you doing to break my pretty flower-glass, I should like to know? I left it safe, as I thought, on the chimney-piece."

Hugh could not answer for sobbing; and Arnold, having finished his occupation on the floor, placed the box on the table again, put his hands in his pockets, and turning to the window began to whistle softly, as though nurse and her wrath were no concern of his. But little Eva said, "No, nursie, it was standing in the middle of the table, and Hugh caught the cloth and pulled it off; it was quite a 'complishment."

"Little Eva, you should not use words that you don't know the meaning of," said Millicent's gentle voice, as she entered the room at that moment. "I suppose you meant accident," she added, smilingly, patting the child's head.

"Yes, auntie, a axletree; that was it."

"But what accident has there been? Oh, your little flower-glass broken, nurse! I am so sorry! how was it done!"

The children were both eager to tell her.

"Well, if it was Hugh's fault, I think he must save up his pocket-money and buy nurse another; —what do you say, Hughie?"

"Yes, I will, auntie."

"It was not Master Hugh's fault, ma'am," put in nurse. She could blame and scold her little nursery people often enough herself, but she was very chary of any one else finding fault with them. "There's more to blame that put it where it could be knocked down;" and she glanced with a meaning look at Martha.

"Why, that was you, nursie," said Eva; "I saw you move it this morning when you were dusting about."

Nurse made no answer; she would fain have laid the blame on Martha, but she did not very well see how she could, so she said nothing.

"Well, it is time I was off to school," said Arnold, turning round.

"I thought you were gone," said his aunt. "Johnnie was seeking for you when I came upstairs."

So Arnold ran away, and no one knew what mischief he had left behind him. Indeed, I think he hardly knew himself. His motive was to get rid of the pencil-case, and perhaps get little Martha into a slight scrape, as he had often done before, but he had no doubt it would all come right without much trouble.

Two days passed and all remained quiet, but on the third afternoon Martha was sewing by the nursery window, when she wanted something out of her box which she could not readily find, and in searching for it she came upon the lost pencil-case. She was so taken by surprise, she did not know what to do. How could it possibly have got there?

Her first impulse was at once to make some inquiry; but as it happened, just at that moment there was no one to inquire of, for the children were down in the drawing-room, and nurse had just gone into the next room for a frock of Eva's to mend. Martha had hardly time to think, but she made up her mind to say nothing at present, but to give it to Agatha privately sometime, tell her where she found it, and ask her not to mention it, and she was just putting it back in her box again when nurse came back.

Nurse always kept a sharp eye on Martha, for she was always rather suspicious of her, her grandmother having no very good character in Rothwell.

"Now then, Martha, what are you hiding away in your box?" she exclaimed, sharply.

Martha said nothing, but bent down over her work, only her cheeks grew redder and redder. She could not tell the truth, for she did not want nurse to know anything about the matter, and she

would not say what was not true, so she was silent, but her silence only increased nurse's suspicions.

She drew the box towards her.

"I am going to see, at any rate."

"Oh, don't, please, Mrs. Nurse, it is mine!"

"If you have nothing in it but what is yours, you need not mind."

Nurse took out leisurely each thing one by one until she came to the bottom.

Martha was in an agony of suspense. She did not know whether to speak out at once; and while she waited nurse drew out the pencil-case, and held it up with a little air of triumph.

"There! I thought I should find something. What do you say to that?"

But instead of answering, Martha did the worst thing she could do, covered her face with her hands and burst into tears.

## THE TRUE HISTORY OF MY PETS.

### TOLD TO THE LITTLE ONES.

IN THREE PARTS.—PART I.

FROM my earliest childhood I have been extremely fond of pets of all kinds, but after I grew up and married, little dancing feet and smiling faces made my old friends somewhat fade away from my memory.

Now hardly a day passes but I am asked by one or other for "a story," and I find that those about "mamma, when she was a little girl and had pets," are the most appreciated.

The other day it was a cold and damp afternoon, when no one cared to go out of doors who was not obliged to do so, and two of my children—Rosie, aged eight, and Willie, aged seven—asked me to read to them whilst they worked. (Willie knits long pieces of flannel list in strips, to make quilts for the poor.)

Presently the door opened a little way, and two very rosy cheeks and bright eyes looked in, and a little voice said, "May Lily and me come down to you, mamma, for a little while, for it is getting too dark to play upstairs, and nurse says it will not be tea-time for long yet?"

"Oh, no mamma," says Willie, "they don't understand the story, and then they will keep talking to you, and we shall hear nothing of it; do let them come another time."

"Mother, *do* let us come," pleads the little voice at the door.

"I will tell you what will be best," says Rosie: "suppose you tell us a story, mamma, that they can all understand!"

"Yes, that will do beautifully," Willie responded, springing up. "I will run and bring *Lily myself.*"

*So off he went, and soon* returned with his little favourite two-year-old sister, with her merry little face and winning ways.

He does not care much about girls, he says, for "they are of so little use" in playing with him, but Lily is so nice, she is *equal* to a boy—which commendation, I fear, means that she is always ready and ripe to help him in the mischief into which he is constantly falling. He tells her graciously that she may get on my lap, and suck her thumb, a habit to which she is strongly addicted; and then all settle themselves on the rug to listen.

"Which story shall I tell you?"

"Oh, about you and your pets; and do tell us from the beginning, just as if we had *never* before been told about them," entreats Rosie; so I commenced.

"The first creature I remember was Polly, a green parrot, brought as a present to my father from South America some years before I was born. She was a very clever bird in her understanding, but she had not much sweetness of disposition, I am sorry to say. She took the strongest likes and dislikes to people from slight causes, and certainly could not be accounted *fickle*, as she never changed her sentiments when once her mind was made up. She could not fly; I do not know from what cause, unless her wings were cut on board ship when she was coming over. Soon after she was given to my father. He was one day crossing the room when the bird was loose, and he accidentally trod upon her and hurt her. From that day she took an inveterate dislike to him, and would croak with anger whenever he came into the room, and if out of her cage, would run at his boots and bite them furiously.

"She also hated one of my brothers to her dying day, because when a child he at one time wore a certain red plaid frock, which offence to her personal tastes she never forgot or forgave. I cannot help thinking he must have teased her when he was wearing this garment, and that her animosity was put down to dislike to the colour.

"She was very fond of *me*, and would let me do almost anything with her, and I was one of the few to whom she was not in the habit of acting treacherously. To some she would pretend to be friends, and put out her claw to invite them to 'shake hands' with her, and then hold fast the finger and bite it! and a bite from a parrot's beak is no joke.

"Polly had a funny way of dancing to what *she* considered music, but to noises which to others appeared somewhat discordant—such as grating the poker on the fender, rubbing one's boot on oil-cloth, and such things. She would then stretch out her wings and gracefully move backwards and forwards, bowing as she moved.

"At times she would get very dusty, and I used to think a bath would do her good, but as she had a strong objection to washing in any kind of saucer or basin, I used to put her into my own bath, and then soap her with a sponge tied on to

a piece of stick. She would scream with anger, and try in vain to climb up the sides and bite the sponge; and yet, strange to say, she would never offer to bite *me*.

"But though she did not like this kind of washing, yet she delighted to go out after a thunderstorm in the summer, and bathe in the little pools left on the walks, and sometimes on the lawn; and she would also stretch out her wings to catch any falling drops from the trees, whilst she murmured with pleasure.

"For about the first twenty years of her life she could say many things, but after that time she became much more silent, and latterly never talked at all."

"*Poor* Polly, how *dedful*," interposed Lily, whose little tongue wags from morning till night, and whose sympathies were consequently fully aroused, as if the bird had suffered from some complaint.

"One day your uncle Augustus brought home a jackdaw from school, and from the first moment Polly resented him as an impertinent interloper. Jack seemed to regard Polly with amusement rather than with jealousy and dislike. He had had his wing cut, but could fly a short distance, and was altogether more nimble than Polly.

"Sometimes we let out the two birds in the same room. Polly with a war croak of rage would go running and stumbling to where Jack would be standing, whilst *he* would remain quite still, with his head under his wing as if asleep. Poll would open her great beak, as if to swallow him up, when he would spring in the most agile way on one side, and with a shrill 'caw caw' would hop into her cage and pull the door shut. The rightful possessor, with croaks of baffled fury, would climb on the outside, and make vain pokes at Jack, who would keep in the middle of the perch, and now and then make darts at his enemy's claws as she crawled over the wires of the cage.

"Poll would take a liking for certain kinds of food, and if we left off giving it to her, would pretend she could eat no other. At one time she used to be kept in the dining-room in winter, and at dessert we used to give her pieces of roasted chestnut. When the season for them passed away, we gave her sweet biscuits, raisins and almonds, and such things instead; but no, her ladyship looked most injured and ill-used, and totally refused the substitute.

"If, however, we pretended to leave the room, and then looked through a crevice of the door, we would see her glance stealthily around, then get off her perch and hastily gobble up the dainties, which she had just before turned with scorn out of her feeding-trough. Then she would sit as quiet and dismal as before—though she would watch us furtively if we came near the cage, evidently trying to find out whether we noticed the disappearance of the sweets.

"She at last became so old that she scarcely cared to move, and died after having been in the family for thirty-five years.

"Jack was a clever bird, and I dare say could here been taught to do many tricks if he had lived longer."

"Oh, mamma, do tell us about his bath," said Mabel; "he must have been a cleverer bird than Polly, for he liked washing so much."

"In the summer-time I used to give him a bath in a large saucer every morning, on a path under the windows. One day I had forgotten to fill it, and I suddenly came upon Jack hopping round and round it, and looking at the little can of water that stood close by. I stood to watch him; and after a minute or two he pulled and pushed the saucer close to the can, and then tried with all his strength to tip it up, so as to pour the water out. He did at last manage to tip the can, but it fell over, and as much water poured away as went into the saucer.

"The cage was usually kept on this path during the day, so that he might go in and out as he liked. After turning him out of it in the morning I always cleaned it, and then placed his dinner, usually consisting of meat, inside. On several occasions our old cat put her head in at the door and robbed him of his meal, which act of theft he doubtless noticed from the bushes where he used to sit. One day when I was preparing his cage as usual, instead of flying off, he stood by, watching me thoughtfully, and as soon as I turned to go, he deliberately shut the door most carefully and with a loud 'caw caw,' as much as to say, 'Now pussy, try your worst,' he ran away into the garden."

"And *did* naughty puss ever eat Jack's dinner again?" asked Willie.

"No, I saw her come several times and sniff about, and try to reach it with her paw, but it was of no use, and she had to look after the mice instead.

"Poor Jack came to a sad end; one day we missed him, and after hunting over the whole of the grounds, found, not *him*, but a heap of black feathers! We believed that a hungry-looking strange cat that we had seen prowling about had, alas! put an end to him in this sad way."

"And did you ever catch the cat and punish it, mamma?"

"No, I think it was frightened at having been so naughty, and so it kept out of my way."

"But perhaps jackdaws are poisonous to cats, mamma, and the wicked pussy died of eating him," said Lily. "Did she ever eat any of your little tiny birds?"

"No, Lily; I had three tiny birds, and they all died of old age."

"Is old age the same as measles?"

They all laughed at this, and then Willie begged me to tell him about the little birds.

VIOLET.

## HOW WE FURNISHED OUR DOLL'S HOUSE.

### Chapter II.—We make Mud Pies and Cups and Saucers.

Willie would make his chair all by himself, and when he had finished and was handling it about, it all came to pieces, for auntie said he hadn't put the ends of the sticks in firmly enough. But he said he didn't care, he would make chairs and more things than chairs without anybody helping him, and he begged some of the sticks from auntie, and he sent out and bought some peas, and they are in cold water now, getting ready for him; I do hope he will let me make some pea-work too.

Gerty's chair wasn't very nice, of course we could not expect much from such a child, so auntie made her a basket of peas and sticks, such a pretty thing, nicer than the chairs, but then I had made mine myself almost alone.

But the next time we go to auntie's we are to have such a treat. We are to take pinafores with us, for fear nurse should be cross at our making ourselves in a mess, and we are to have wet clay to do what we like with.

Won't that be nice? And I'll tell you a secret. Willie and Gerty and I are going to furnish a doll's house with our own work. Auntie says she'll show us how if we are good children and have patience. Auntie says we can make chairs and tables, and a baby's cot, and a bed, and sofas and even the perambulator and a carriage, with the pea-work; and we are going to do it. And we are to make all our carpets with pretty coloured paper plaited in mats such as auntie showed us, and we are to make our cups and saucers and plates and vases out of the wet clay auntie has promised we shall use, and there are such a lot of nice things, besides, but I will tell you about them another time, for nurse is calling and I must go.

The next time we went to spend the afternoon with auntie she showed us a large dish filled with a lump of greyish-looking clay, and a wet cloth spread over it, to keep it damp, she told us.

But we could do nothing until our pinafores were on, for nurse gets very cross if we make ourselves dirty or untidy; so when they were tied on, and we had taken our seats at the table, auntie gave each of us a piece of brown paper to lay before us, and then a small ball of the clay, which she rolled out with her own hands.

Besides the clay she gave each of us a piece of hard wood that she called a "modelling knife," though it was a funny sort of knife, and would cut nothing, I am sure, that was harder than soft clay. One end of it was quite long and pointed, and the other end was flattened out to look like a knife with edges on both sides; but although the edges seemed sharp, we couldn't have cut ourselves with *it if we had tried ever so.*

It was very nice to have the soft clay to do what we liked with. Gerty rolled hers out round and round, and made worms with it. Such a lot of worms as Gerty made would have been enough for the whole of our back garden if they had only had life in them, but of course they hadn't.

And then Willie said he wasn't going to do anything that girls did, and he tried to make a sheep, but it wouldn't stand on its legs; and then he said he would make a cat lying down, but it wasn't a bit like our Tabby, or like any cat that I've ever seen, and even auntie said that if Willie wouldn't be so conceited, and would try to learn instead of expecting to do everything at once, he'd be able to model nicely much sooner.

Oh dear, it seems so easy to model cups and saucers, and vases and baskets of flowers, and every kind of pretty thing as I look at auntie doing so, but directly I begin to touch the clay myself it will get into flat cakes and mud pies, which are almost as bad as Gerty's worms. I can't even roll a ball round, it will get flat at the edges, and have little bumps upon it, just like the hollows in my fingers, and when I try to roll it on the table it isn't much better. I don't think it's of any use my trying to model anything for our doll's house, and if it were not such a bad example for Gerty I should get some water and mix up with the clay to make nice thin mud, like that you see in the gutters when the men with the shovels and carts come to take it away, and that I always think must be so nice to play with.

I do just say to auntie that I think it would be nice to have some water to mix up with it, but auntie either doesn't hear me or doesn't take any notice, for she says—

"Come, now, dear, you must make something, or we shall never get any further with our doll's house. See, you shall begin by making a saucer."

I did not say I could not do it, though I felt quite sure of it, but I looked at auntie, who said she would make one first to show me.

It was not so very difficult after all. Auntie just took a piece of clay and rolled it round, and then she put her finger in the middle of it and flattened and hollowed it out till it was the shape of a saucer. Then she made a mark round for the place for the cup to stand, and she made the little rim underneath for the saucer to stand upon, and then it was finished.

Of course mine was not so nice as auntie's, but it was much better than I thought I could make; and then I asked if we could not model some cups too.

Auntie said, "A cup is more difficult to make than a saucer, but if you like we'll try." So we began.

## EDITORIAL NOTICE.

Letters for the Editor should be addressed to him only, at 24, Paternoster Row, London.

# SUNSHINE.

EDITED BY W. M. WHITTEMORE, D.D., RECTOR OF ST. KATHERINE CREE, LONDON.

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[ALINE PICKING HOPS.]

## LITTLE ALINE.

### A STORY OF GIPSY LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PET'S DIFFICULTIES."

### CHAPTER XVI.—HOW ALINE WAS PUZZLED.

LITTLE Aline left the church immediately the service was ended, because she thought that the lady would perhaps speak to her afterwards.

It was not because the little girl was shy that she avoided her; had the Queen accosted her anywhere she would have talked readily to her; but the gipsies kept very much to themselves, and disliked inquiries about their habits and ways. Aline felt that the lady would be sure to ask who she was, where she lived, and whether she went to school, and would perhaps say that she would come and see her; and Aline had been taught to be reserved with strangers, and never to invite them to visit her home.

The gipsies, as a class, had secrets which they did not wish revealed; and it is probable that

some of their customs would not have borne inspection; at all events, they were a reserved people, and mingled but little with the world in general.

It is true Aline had met Ethel's advances halfway, and had chatted freely to her; but then Ethel was only a child like herself, and was well known to all the villagers; besides, the gipsy clan to which Aline belonged were so much at home in that neighbourhood that they were more sociable there than elsewhere.

Aline walked slowly back to the tents, thinking over what she had seen and heard. She was perplexed and confused, as she well might be, by a service so new to her; but the music and singing had charmed her, and she no longer wondered that persons liked going to church to listen to such beautiful sounds.

The prayers were, for the most part, unintelligible to her, and she could not see any reason why the congregation should kneel and partly hide their faces. She knew there was a God, and that He had made her; and Ralph had told her that Christians prayed,—that is, talked to Him; though how He could hear, or what good it did them, Aline could not imagine.

The constant movements of the people, too—sometimes standing, sometimes sitting, sometimes kneeling—rather bewildered her; how could they tell when to make the right changes? and how could they do it altogether so exactly? One would be very long learning one's part, Aline thought.

Then, why "the man" should go up into a little box, shut in all by himself, and read something out of a book—Mr. Bertram, you see, was not an extemporary preacher—was another mystery to Aline. The earnestness of his manner, however, riveted her attention, though she did not understand much of his sermon; and she was struck with the frequent repetition of the name of *Jesus*. Who was this Jesus? Ralph told her He was a very good man; and so He must be if all that this minister said about Him was true; for he said that if anybody would only go to Jesus, He would give them riches and treasures which they could never find in the world; He would comfort them in all their troubles, and would help them in all their difficulties.

"And it makes no difference," said Mr. Bertram, "whether you are rich, or poor, old, or young, respected or despised, if you will come, come just as you are to Jesus, you will find in Him all that you want; and you will be safe and happy both now and for ever. You need bring nothing to Him; all you have to do is to take from Him what He holds out to you, and He gives it freely, without money and without price."

Aline's little heart grew warm and eager as she listened: she could not enter into the real meaning of the preacher's words, yet when he bade them *come*, and come at once to Jesus, she felt that she *would gladly have run to Him* at that moment had she only known who that wonderful Jesus was, and where she could find Him.

Ah, how many there are in our midst, dear reader, who, though not so unraught as Aline was, are yet waiting for us to guide them to the Saviour!

One thing that Mr. Bertram said puzzled Aline. He spoke to his hearers about the heavy burdens that many of them were carrying, and assured them that if they would take them to Jesus, He would bear those burdens for them, so that they might go free, and be light-hearted, and even joyful. Aline glanced round on the congregation, but she could not see a burden anywhere. Most persons were well-dressed, and leaned back comfortably in their cushioned seats, and the poorer ones, who sat beside Aline on the forms in the aisle, though some of them looked careworn, had not the smallest parcel either in their hands or lying beside them. So that Aline was fairly at a loss to make out the clergyman's meaning.

Her aunt did not ask Aline where she had been. She had not wanted her, and as she could always trust her not to get into any mischief, she rarely asked how or where she amused herself. Had she been told, she would most likely have laughed at the idea of Aline being so silly as to go into a church; and her uncle would perhaps have scolded her, and have forbidden her to go there again; and Aline was therefore silent as to the way in which she had spent her Sunday morning.

But the child never forgot that first time when she went to God's house. The remembrance of it lingered like a pleasant dream in her memory, for they left Cloverly the following week for the hop-picking in Kent, and there she had to work so hard during the six days that she was too tired on Sunday to do anything but rest herself.

## Chapter XVII.—The Old Gentleman's Mistake.

The places in which the hop plant is grown are called hop-gardens; and a very busy and animated scene they present when the time for gathering the hops has arrived. A great many Irish people find their way thither on such occasions, and numbers of the London poor turn out of their wretched dwellings in the courts and alleys there, and hasten into the country to gain employment, in order that they may carry back with them a little stock of money. Whole families set off on these expeditions, for boys and girls can work at hop-picking as well as men and women, and were it not for such early visits to the country some of those children would never see a green field or wild flower, or breathe the pure fresh air untainted by London smoke. These little ones look forward with great interest to the return of the hop season; it is a pleasant change for them to leave their miserable homes, and to have the novelty of a ride in however humble a

fashion. And though they of course have to work hard, it is work in the open air, and of a nicer kind than they are accustomed to.

A hop-garden is a very pretty sight. The delicate green colour of the hops as they hang in rich festoons from pole to pole may well be attractive in the eyes of those who usually gaze on little else but dirt-begrimed houses and dingy streets. And, indeed, they form one of the greatest ornaments to the landscape in which they are placed.

Still, the money which is earned by picking them for the farmer is the best sight of all to the miserable half-starved poor who congregate for that purpose. They live during that period in little sheds or huts, which are built for them in a field or on a waste piece of ground, and unless the season happens to be a rainy one they manage tolerably well with that rough accommodation.

Some of the hop-pickers are an intemperate, improvident set, quarrelling amongst themselves, and not remarkable for their honesty; but others belong to a more decent class, and are better in their habits.

In this latter class we must reckon Aline and her friends. In spite of their tawdry finery the gipsies were clean and sober, and kept steadily to their work. They seldom mingled in either the disputes or the merriment of their companions, and if any poultry was missing from the adjoining farmyards, they, at all events, were not the thieves.

Aline and her aunt worked together. They had a bin to themselves. A bin is a sort of high canvas box, into which the hops are picked, and from which they are afterwards measured out by the bushel into huge sacks called "pokes."

They were paid according to the work they got through, and as the hops were fairly measured, no one could complain of that arrangement.

Aline was a sharp child, and her little brown hands picked off the hops far more quickly than her aunt did with hers; and though she was often very tired at the end of the day, and fell fast asleep as soon as she shut her eyes, yet she never grumbled, nor thought that hers was a hard lot. Her aunt always treated her very kindly while the hop-gathering lasted, for Aline's earnings added a considerable sum to the general purse; and a new frock or gay-coloured shawl was often her reward at the end.

One evening Aline's aunt sent her into the town to buy a little tea and sugar, and one or two other delicacies for the next day. The next day was Aline's birthday, and it was to be distinguished by the unusually good fare that was to be partaken of.

Aline's pale looks procured this walk for her.

"You are not well, child, and a brisk walk will perhaps do you good," said her aunt. "I don't want to have you laid up just now if we can help it."

Aline, nothing loth, twisted her old shawl in a picturesque style round her shoulders, and turned into the long winding lane leading to the town. She had been rather closely confined lately, and enjoyed this release from her labours.

She walked rapidly along, humming snatches of an old song, and dwelling with a child's delight on the anticipated feast of the morrow. Very likely Ralph would give her something then; he had bought her those gold ear-rings on her last birthday.

It was the market day of the town, and though the market was over at that hour, it had brought many persons into the town who, for various reasons, still remained in it. The streets were thus much fuller than usual, and Aline was glad of it, for she was fond of a little bustle now and then, and she was especially fond of watching her fellow-creatures.

An old gentleman, with a broad-brimmed hat and a long coat that did not seem to have a speck upon it, notwithstanding the dusty roads, attracted her notice, for he had been a large purchaser that day, judging from the number of small packets that he was carrying. Not only were his hands filled, but his pockets were well stuffed also; and one parcel, wrapped in soft white paper, being jostled by its companions, stuck so far out that presently, as somebody pushed against him in passing, it dropped down on the ground. So gentle was its descent that its owner never heard it fall, and he walked on quite unconscious of his loss.

Aline picked it up and hurried after him.

"You've just been and dropped this out of your pocket, sir," she said, handing it to him.

"Dear, dear! how could I be so careless?" exclaimed the old gentleman. "I am much obliged to you for bringing it me," he added to Aline; "for it is a present for my little granddaughter on her birthday to-morrow, and I should be very sorry if I had lost it."

"Why, *my* birthday is to-morrow!" said Aline, in surprise, as if it were a most remarkable occurrence that another little girl should have been born on the same day as herself.

"Is it really?" replied the old gentleman, smiling. "Well, I must give you something to buy yourself a cake with; and mind you think of me when you are eating it."

He put a shining new sixpence into Aline's hand as he was speaking, and then walked on.

I said that he put a shining new sixpence into Aline's hand. Well, that was what he meant to do; but what he really did was to give her a half-sovereign by mistake. He had forgotten that he had one loose amongst his silver, and judging by the size, had taken it out of his pocket without looking at it before he parted with it.

For a minute or so Aline did not herself perceive the difference. The evening was growing slightly dusk, and Aline *felt*, rather than saw, the gift on which her fingers had instinctively closed. As soon as she discovered the old gentleman's mistake, she looked hastily for him, that she might restore to him the half-sovereign. For she

was sure he had not intended to give her a gold piece. But he had disappeared from view. She looked up the street and down the street, but could not see him anywhere; then she peeped in at the shop windows, thinking that he had perhaps wished to buy something more, but he was not in any of them. So at length Aline was obliged to give up the search, and attend to her own errands, for her aunt would be cross if she were out too long.

## Chapter XVIII.—Honesty Triumphant.

Aline bought the articles which her aunt had told her to get, and then went back to the hoppers. As she retraced her steps she was full of thought about the half-sovereign. Was it really hers? ought she to keep it, or ought she still to try and find out the old gentleman to whom it belonged?

Now, Aline was inclined to keep it. She had never before had so large a sum in her possession; certainly she had never had ten shillings which she could call her own. What a treasure it would be to her! Visions of the nice things she could buy with it floated before her imagination, and made her rejoice that she was so rich. Cakes and sweets and fruit, to be eaten in secret, or to be shared with Ralph, who was not at all particular where good things came from so long as he had them, and who would not betray the giver, would use up some of the money; and Aline had long had a desire for a handsome purse, and for a silver thimble. Of course these must not be produced, at least not just yet, in her aunt's presence; but she could display them to her gipsy playfellows for their envy and admiration; and she should feel, while they were lying snugly in the corner of her pocket, how well off she was to have such things.

It was true the old gentleman had not meant to bestow the half-sovereign upon her, but as he *had* made the mistake, she would be very foolish not to profit by it. If she knew who he was and where he resided the case would be different, though even then she did not see that she was obliged to relinquish what was actually given her; but now, to think of looking for a strange old gentleman, in a strange town, would be like looking for a needle in a bundle of hay. So Aline folded the tiny piece of gold in paper, and pinned it carefully in the bosom of her frock; for if her aunt was aware of her having it, there would not be much chance of Aline's seeing it any more.

Aline could scarcely sleep for thinking of her unexpected property. And she woke up several times in the night with a half-frightened sort of feeling, as if she had either lost something or had been accused of some crime. Aline's aunt was strictly honest, and she had brought up the child to despise anything mean or underhanded; so that *Aline's morality, though not* founded upon the best *of motives, was of a* far higher order than Ralph's; and she would not have kept the half-sovereign if she had been able to return it at once to its owner. So that I do not think she was to blame, unless it was for not feeling willing, even if she now had the opportunity of restoring the half-sovereign.

Her birthday was not different from any other day, except for the better provisions which they had for dinner and tea. Aline could not have a holiday, because the hop-pickers, unless they are ill, must not desert their post; besides, poor people know the truth of the saying, "No work, no bread." But her uncle gave her sixpence for herself, and Ralph brought her a small but pretty brooch for a present; so that Aline was as fortunate as most girls in her situation.

But somehow the half-sovereign was uppermost in her mind, and rather weighed on her spirits. She scarcely liked having so much money unknown to anybody, and yet she was so anxious to preserve her secret that she was afraid every minute lest she should accidentally betray it. Ralph's brooch, too, did not give her half the pleasure that it would otherwise have done, for Aline thought to herself, "It is very small, I could have bought a much larger one with my own money." Wealth does not always bring happiness; it certainly had not brought it to Aline.

Aline's birthday was on Saturday, and the next morning she was so tired and sleepy that she was not up till nearly dinner-time. But after dinner the weather was so lovely that Ralph and she wandered down the lane, talking on different subjects, till they found themselves just at the entrance of the town where Aline had been on the Friday evening.

"Let's go a bit further, Aline, there's some first-rate blackberries on t'other side of the town. I know a short cut across; it won't take us long to get to 'em."

Aline consented, for she liked blackberries; but just as they were crossing the road Ralph suddenly exclaimed, "Oh, there's Long George yonder; wait a minute, Aline, while I run and speak to him about his dogs."

Ralph left her standing on the edge of the pavement, and as she was looking after him she saw the old gentleman in the broad-brimmed hat coming slowly down a high flight of steps belonging to an old-fashioned house.

Her first impulse was to run away, for he might easily recognise her, and ask for his half-sovereign; but as he turned in the opposite direction she felt she was safe, and did not therefore stir.

Yet there was an irresolution in her manner which showed that she was not altogether satisfied with herself. She moved a step forward, and then retreated a little; then she set off again, and again she stood still.

"Shall I, or shall I not?" she seemed to be saying to herself.

All at once her mind was evidently made up, for she walked quickly up the road after the old

gentleman. He was going along rather leisurely, so that Aline soon overtook him, and laying her hand on his arm without the least ceremony, she said,—

"Have you missed half a sovereign, sir?"

"Yes, I have," he said, in momentary surprise. "Ah, I thought I must have given it to you instead of a sixpence."

Aline silently put it into his hand; it required a little effort to part with it cheerfully.

"You are a good girl not to have spent it," he said, kindly; "now what must I give you for bringing it back to me?"

"Nothing," answered Aline, rather proudly.

"Oh, that will not suit either of us," he replied, with a pleasant smile, at the same time opening his purse and selecting half a crown from its contents. "There, my little maid, take this and buy what you like with it," he said, "and always keep as honest as you are now. Who taught you to be so honest, my dear?"

"Nobody, as I know of," she said, bluntly.

"Can you read your Bible?" he asked.

"I can read a little, but I haven't no Bible; none of our folks has one."

"How can they learn the way to heaven, then?"

"They doesn't learn it, and they don't want to either!" she answered, rather defiantly; "we are quite as good as other people though we don't talk about it."

"Poor child," he said, gently, "Jesus loves your people as much as He does mine, and *He* wants you to live with Him in heaven some day. Will you have this little book?" he added; "it will tell you more than I can now, for I must not stay."

It was a small pocket Testament, the only book which he had with him, that he offered her.

"Will it tell me about Jesus?" she asked, rather eagerly, as she took it not unwillingly from him.

"Yes, dear child, and of the way to be saved through Him. Good-bye, and may God bless you."

Ralph came back just as this conversation was finished.

## HOW WE FURNISHED OUR DOLL'S HOUSE.

### Chapter III.—We weave Paper Carpets.

I THOUGHT I should never make mine, though auntie made hers so easily. First I made the top of the cup so wide, it was nearly the same size as the saucer. Then I took another piece of clay and tried again. This time I tried to make the hollow with the sharp end of my modelling knife, but the point poked right through, and when I had mended it the edges got so dry and stiff that they split and broke, and I had to take another piece of clay and begin again. This time I did better, and I made a little handle to the cup and put it to stand on the saucer, and it was almost, though not quite, as pretty as auntie's.

But Willie did better than either of us. After all, I must say he is clever, though he is a boy. First of all he made a tray like the china one that cousin Bella uses for afternoon tea, a nice oval tray with stand-up sides. Then when that was quite finished—and he took great pains with it—he modelled a funny little teapot, just like cousin Bella's. I don't think it would have held much water, and it's my opinion that the cover wouldn't come off, for he wouldn't let me try, but there was a hole all down the spout, and the handle seemed all right, though I don't suppose it was very strong.

Well, then Willie modelled a sugar-basin, and that was difficult, for there were two handles to it, and I said he must make a cream jug, and it must be a pretty one, for of course a doll couldn't do without cream any more than she could without tea or sugar. And when that was done he made three little tiny, tiny cups and saucers, just large enough for the tray, and just as if one little doll was going to have two other little dolls to come and visit her.

When Willie had finished it was tea-time, so our hands were washed and our pinafores taken off, and all our clay and modelling put away, though I should have liked to make some more things. But auntie said we had done quite enough for one day, and she would give us some clay and our modelling knives to take home, and would tell nurse how to keep the clay damp, and to let us have it to model with, for auntie says we must have a good many lessons and a great deal of practice before we can model things at all well enough for a doll's house.

And she says the same of the chairs and things we make with soft peas and sticks that I told you about before. She says no man ever learnt to make a real table or a real chair in one lesson, or even in twenty lessons; but that he tries and tries and tries, and learns to make one little piece, and then another little piece, and then puts them together and finishes it off; and sometimes it takes two or three men to make even one piece of furniture; so of course Willie and Gerty and I do our best every time we go about it, and we've taught nurse how to make a chair too, and how to model cups and saucers, and nurse says she is going to make a baby's cot in pea-work; she is sure she can do it, and I dare say she can.

So when papa comes up in the nursery to see us he calls us "busy bees," and he is so pleased with what we make, and he takes such care of it, that it's quite delightful to make him a present of some of our work.

I have something else to tell you. Auntie is coming to tea with us next week, and she's going to teach us something else quite new towards our

doll's house; she says it's something for weaving paper carpets. I've heard of paper curtains, but never of paper carpets before. Have you? I suppose our doll's house is to be quite in the newest fashion.

Gerty and I were quite excited the day auntie came, for nurse said it was not dirty work we were to do this time,—she calls modelling dirty—and so she put us on our white frocks with pink ribbons and our pink shoes, and we felt like going to a party. But we were to have a small party instead or going to one, for our two cousins, Edith and Charlie, came with auntie, and we knew we should have great fun. Papa, too, said he should come home early to be with us, and we were to have tea in the dining-room instead of the nursery, because it would be all the more like having company.

So after we had shown our cousins the pretty things we had made with modelling clay and sticks and peas, and Edie and Charlie both said they could make things like them, we all got our chairs and sat up close to the table, while auntie opened a box she had brought with her.

The box was full of the most lovely coloured pieces of paper, pink and blue, and green and gold, and black and yellow and red. Some of them were in long narrow strips, and the others were in large, long, and square pieces. But the long and square pieces had cuts made in the middle of them, just the same width as the loose narrow pieces in the box. There was one thing about these square pieces of paper that I noticed, the cuts were all one way, coming from the top to the bottom of the square only there was a piece—auntie said about half an inch,—left all round like the frame of a picture, and that held the rest together.

Auntie said we might all choose our own mats, of whatever colour we liked. Cousin Edie chose a blue one, Charlie took a pink one. Willie's was bronze colour, mine was white, and Gerty's was yellow.

The next thing—which was more difficult—was to select the colours we would like to weave into our mats. Mine was not so troublesome, because every colour suited white, and Willie's was easy enough, because bronze was almost as easy to select for. But Charlie, who had a pink mat, first of all selected a dreadfully bright green, and when auntie said the colours together made her eyes ache, he said he would have quite as glaring a blue. Auntie told him that was nearly as bad, and explained that a "vivid colour," as she called it, should have something soft or dark to contrast with it, and not some other colour as bright and hard as itself. Then she took some white strips, and some bronze and blue-black, and put against the pink, and Charlie at last took the bronze colour, though I don't think he liked it.

I had pink strips to weave into my mat, which was white, and the paper was all ribbed and watered like the dress nurse said was white *moire antique*, that she once showed me when she told me my mamma was married in it.

When we had decided on the colours we would have, auntie gave each of us what she called a needle. A queer kind of needle though. It was a long piece of wood, thin and rather flat, and at the thickest end of it there was a small slit, and auntie showed us how to take one of our short strips of paper, and push the end into this slit until it stuck fast. She said that was the way we threaded our needle.

Then auntie showed us how to weave our mats. First we had our mats on the table straight before us, and then we took up one of the strips of the mat upon the wooden needle; then we missed one and took up the next, we missed another and took up the one after that, and so we went on, until half of the strips were on the needle, and the other half under it. Then auntie said we were to pull the needle out with the left hand gently, until the paper stuck in the end of it covered the mat; when this was so, we were to put the right hand on it to keep it from going any further, and pull the needle away leaving the strip behind. Then we pushed the strip up to the top of the mat with the needle. After this, we stuck another strip in the needle, and began with the right hand again. This time we took up one and went over one strip again like in the last row, but we took up the strip we had missed the last time, and went over the one we had taken up, just as I have noticed nurse does when she darns our stockings. It's just like darning stockings too, only we've got a wooden instead of a steel needle, and our work is with paper instead of a stocking and wool or cotton.

It seemed easy enough, but it is really harder than it looked, for two or three times I got mine wrong, I went over two strips, or took up two, or began wrong and took up the same that I'd taken up for the last row, or made some mistake, though it almost seemed as if I couldn't make any, as though there wasn't room for a mistake I mean.

But I wasn't the only one. Gerty kept on going wrong, but then she is such a child, you know, and Willie, though he does think himself so clever, made two mistakes, and didn't find it out until his mat was nearly finished, and then he had to pull out the strips as far as the mistakes went, and do it over again. It took a long time to finish our mats, for they each hold a great number of strips, and when they seemed nearly full auntie showed us how to push them up close together, "to make it firm," she said, and then there was room for more. Gerty got tired before hers was finished, and auntie said she might get off the chair and play with the kittens and do it another day; but I finished mine, and Willie made his beautifully at last, and then auntie put all the ends of the strips under the wide piece of paper that I told you was left on each side for the frame, and gummed them down to it, so that they couldn't move out of their places.

Then, because they were longer than the mat was wide, she cut off the ends to make the sides even; and to make the whole still firmer she pasted a sheet of note-paper at the back.

We were all very proud of our mats when they were finished, but auntie says they are nothing to what we shall be able to do when we have had more practice. She says we shall be able to make patterns of stars, and flowers, and leaves, and letters, and the pictures of animals and all kinds of beautiful things on our mats, instead of just taking up one strip and going over the next as we have done, but I expect it will be a long while before we shall be so clever, though auntie says we must be able to do something very different from what we have done to-day before she shall think of cutting out the carpets or the paper in the shape of the rooms, for us to weave for our doll's house; so we mean to practise, and auntie has promised to give us several more lessons before we really begin the furniture for our doll's house. Dear me, I never thought there was so much work to be done, or that it took so much labour and practice to make the things we see and use every day.

But I must not forget to tell you the fun we had after our mats were put away. Papa came in first, and admired them, and said he should like to have one from each of us to keep with the pea-work chairs and the things we had modelled for him; and then auntie said we would all stand up and have a game, papa and all, before tea-time.

It was such fun, and looked so odd to see papa and auntie standing with us, taking hold of our hands and making a circle to dance round, and we enjoyed it ever so much more than we should have done by ourselves. And auntie taught us a game such as we had never played before. First of all we sang a song, and then we pretended to have corn in our dresses, and to throw it about like a farmer sows his corn, and then we danced round singing; and then we made believe to reap the corn, and to thrash it and sift it, and then to rest when our work was done, and we danced and laughed so much that auntie said she was beginning to feel tired; and then tea was ready. But auntie says the next time she comes she will bring a pair of scissors each for us, and will teach us how to cut out beautiful things in paper for antimacassars and curtains for our doll's house.

JANE MILL.

## THE SONG OF LOVE.

THERE's a far-off land, on whose wondrous strand
Is a city bright and fair,
By no mortal hands upreared it stands,
And glows in the balmy air:
It hath no need of the sun's bright ray,
It knoweth no darksome night,
In the glory of God is eternal day,
In the smile of the Lamb is light.

Its walls are of gold, and of gems untold,
Of costly pearl each gate,
Wide open they stand, and on either hand
Angelic guardians wait;
To those who enter a robe as white
As the driven snow they bring,
And welcome them home to the presence bright
of their eternal king.

And a beauteous song that ransomed throng
With happy voices sing,
While the perfumed air, and the streets so fair,
With hallelujahs ring;
It speaks of love, of undying love,
With love its accents flow,
But he who would sing that song above
Must begin it here below.

Who listens may hear, most sweet and clear,
Its joyous undertones,
That song of love may be heard above
The world's unresting moans;
It echoes down from the boundless sky,
It re-echoes from earth and sea,
And human hearts are throbbing high
To that sacred minstrelsy.

Yea, it conquers strife, and it brightens life,
That song that the ransomed sing,
It sheds fresh light on the darkened sight,
It ennobles the meanest thing;
Its power shall last when the world hath past,
And on the eternal shore,
Shall circle round in harmonious sound,
Still brightening evermore. I. M. MORTIMER.

## BURIED FLOWERS.

1. Look, Arthur, O see that poor child!
2. It really does not seem a year since Kate left.
3. Now all Flo Werner can do to obtain a living is needlework.
4. It came by the mail car, Nat, I only just happened to see it in time.
5. Did you see that man, Em., on Ernest's new horse?
6. Will Frederic act us a play when he comes?
7. I rise every morning at six o'clock.
8. I like to see Mr. Pope on your black mare.

AIMEE L. C. T.

## A TALE OF AN OAK.

SOLUTION OF THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH PICTURE STORY.

ABOUT two hundred years ago, in a large park in one of the midland counties of England, there was a fine old oak tree, whose wide-spreading branches afforded a pleasant shade in hot weather, and its fine large acorns were much appreciated by the pigs who fed upon them, and who were considered to be the fattest in the county. One fine day a little boy from the Manor sauntered through the park till he came to the oak, under the branches of which he stopped to rest. Suddenly he stooped, and picking up an acorn, cried, "I will plant it, and perhaps when I am a man it will have grown into a stately tree." He ran off to find his playfellow, little Mabel, the forester's daughter, and showing her the acorn, pointed to the oak,

saying, "Perchance this little nut may one day become such as yonder giant tree." She seemed pleased at the idea, so fetching a spade he dug a hole in the ground, she standing by and watching him meanwhile.

* * * * *

The scene has changed now since that little boy and girl planted the acorn. There is a hawking party at the Manor, and the young host (now no longer a little boy) is entertaining his guests, and most especially the beautiful girl by his side, in the most approved manner.

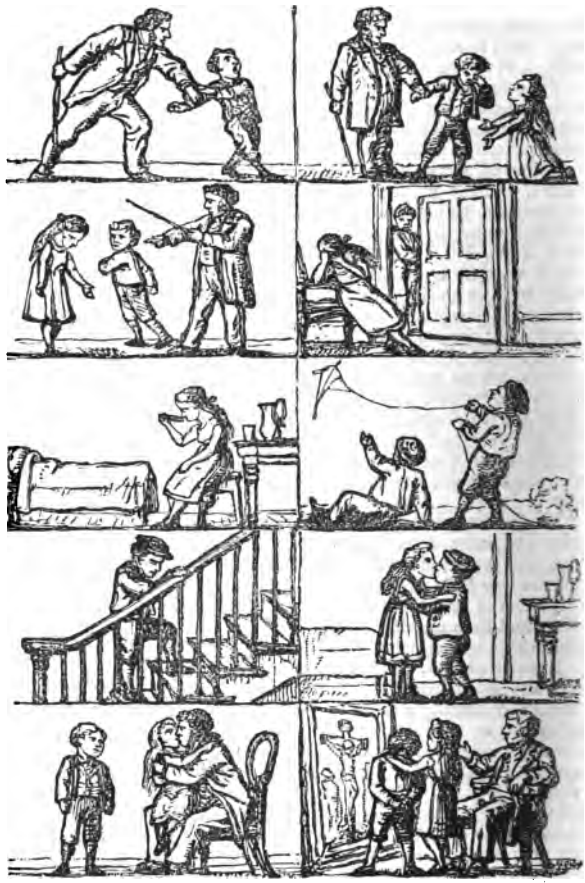
But time changes all things, and one would not recognise either the laughing boy or the gallant youth, in the feeble old man who, mourning for the loss of his wife, and shattered in health, has come back, leaning on a stick and the strong arm of his faithful serving-man, to revisit the home of his fathers. How he loves to wander on the old terraces where he played when he was a boy, and stand before the strong young oak sapling which has sprung from that acorn planted so long ago! But he is surely failing, and soon another monument, bearing the words "Sacred to the memory of Sir Hugh S—— and his wife," is added to the many such which people the old churchyard.

* * * * *

Again the Manor has changed owners. This time its master is a needy squire, who is cutting down much of the timber in the park, in order to pay some of his debts, and along with many other noble trees our old friend, now arrived at maturity (the parent oak has long since decayed), falls a prey to the woodman's axe. But its lot is not to be sold with its companions. The squire's lady, happening to wish for a chair for her drawing-room, made out of wood grown on her husband's estate, our friend is sent to London, and is there converted into an old-fashioned, carved oak chair; and in it may be often seen a fair-haired boy, a descendant of that little boy who first planted the acorn (and who is said to be rather like his great-grandfather than otherwise), reading that best of all books, the Bible; for little Rupert's mother is a Christian woman, and endeavours to instil holy principles into her boy's mind. And here we must bid them farewell; only let us remember not to despise little things because they are little, for great things often have very small beginnings.

LIZZIE H. (13).

*Falsgrave, Scarborough.*



## PICTURE STORY.

### No. XC.

HONOURABLE MENTION.—Meynella W., Mary G. C., Bessie McD., Rose A. L., Lilian S., Marie A. M., Carrie H. B., Primrose, Alice T. P., Annie E. W., Jessie A. D., Wilhelmina C., Florence M. S., Eleanor S., Alice P., Kate E. D., Emmie J. C., Elizabeth A. G., Annie F. B., Rose H., Lucille L., Lilla M. T., Katie B., Alice B. B., Maud M. W., Annie S. M., Emily S. W., Florence I. C., Susan G., Emily B.; Frank L. P., Herbert W. M., Willie T., Lionel L., James F. C., Samuel S., Frederic R. E.

Many thanks for photographs, Easter cards, flowers, and book-markers. We cannot attend to anonymous letters, nor reply to any letters in *Sunshine*. Where replies are necessary we will send them to the writers, if they have enclosed a stamp for postage.

Solutions of the ninetieth story should be posted not later than the 8th of this month.

EDITOR.

[MR. JACKSON'S SPECTACLES.]

## AUNT MILLICENT'S CHARGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SOLDIER HAROLD," &C.

### CHAPTER XII.—HARSH JUDGMENT.

"OH, Martha, Martha, I was sure all along you were not fair and above board, but I had no idea you were so bad as this! Here has Miss Agatha been making no end of a commotion about this little thing, and you had it all the time. I suppose you were taking it out to have a look at it when you thought no one could see you. How fortunate that I came in just at that moment! else your wickedness might have been undiscovered for long enough. What do you think Miss Grey will say to you when she knows?"

"But indeed, nurse," sobbed Martha, "I did not take it, indeed I didn't. I know no more about it than you do, *I never saw it before* that minute."

"Then how did it get into your box? can you say that?"

No, Martha could not say; she could guess in her own mind, but she could not be sure, so she only said that somebody must have put it there.

"Fiddlestick! Who do you think would meddle with your box but yourself? No, no, Martha, these excuses won't go down with me; some folks might be deceived by them, but I'm not one of that sort. If you had just found it, as you say, wouldn't you have told me about it at once, instead of crying in this way? Keep to the truth, Martha; whatever you have done, you make it ten times worse by telling a lie about it."

Martha said no more; it was useless trying to justify herself to nurse, and she was naturally timid and quiet, and did not care to say more than was necessary; she dried her eyes and sat down to her work again.

But nurse had no intention of passing over the

matter. She left the room with the little pencil-case, which she had held in her hand all the time, and went to the drawing-room. Millicent was there, and Agatha and Ida Gascoigne, and the two children.

Little Eva ran to Ida's lap when she saw nurse, exclaiming,—

"Oh, nursie, you must not come for us yet; there hasn't one quarter of an inch of the time gone yet, and Ida wants me,—don't you, Ida?"

"I don't want you, Miss Eva," said nurse, gravely, and then she walked up straight to Millicent.

"If you please, ma'am, is not this what Miss Agatha lost?" holding up the pencil-case.

"Oh, my dear little treasure!" exclaimed Agatha, starting up and snatching it out of her hand. "Oh, you good nurse! where have you found it? I had given up all expectation of ever seeing it again."

"You have not had so very long to wait, Agatha," said her aunt; "three days, is it not? your patience has not had much to try it this time. —But where did you find the pencil, nurse?"

"Where you would least expect, Miss Grey, though I must say I was not surprised; in Martha's work-box."

"Thief!" burst from Agatha's excited lips. "And when I asked her she said she had never seen it! Aunt Millicent, she must be turned out of the house directly."

"Don't judge so hastily, Agatha," said Millicent, gently; "you do not know any particulars yet—how the poor child may have struggled with the temptation before she yielded."

"She has yielded, that is enough for me," answered Agatha as she turned away. "For the future I shall lock my drawers."

"What has poor Martha to say about it, nurse?"

"Martha says she didn't take it, ma'am, but I don't believe her, not for one moment I don't."

"Pencil-cases don't usually walk into boxes of themselves," remarked Agatha, with an air of scorn.

"No, that's what I think, Miss Agatha. Hands must have put it there, and it's Martha's hands, and no one else's."

"Oh, nurse," said Millicent earnestly, tenderly, almost with the tears in her eyes, "do suspend your judgment for a little while. If indeed it be as you say, remember that this poor child has not had the same careful training that you and I have had; and she may have yielded to the suddenness of temptation in an unguarded moment."

"But Martha denies having done it, ma'am."

"Martha is timid and easily frightened. Send her to my room, and I will talk to her there alone."

Nurse went away, saying to herself, "Miss Grey *is going for* to excuse that wicked child, I do *believe I she's a good young* lady, but she is very *easily imposed upon.*"

Martha was standing just within the door, her hands clasped firmly one within another, and her eyes fixed on the floor. Millicent laid her hand on her shoulder before she was aware she was there; but Martha only turned round, raised her eyes for a moment with such an appealing look to Millicent's face, and then they sank again to the floor, and she stood as before, saying nothing, but waiting, as it were, for her sentence.

Millicent's kind heart was touched with pity; whether the child had really done what she was accused of or not, she could not deal hardly with her.

She sat down on the sofa and beckoned Martha to a seat beside her; but Martha came and fell on her knees before her, covered her face with her hands, and burst into tears, as she had done before to nurse.

"This looks like guilt," thought Millicent, but not yet would she judge her.

"Now, Martha, I want to know all about this. Tell me the truth, dear, however bad it is. I shall not be angry, only grieved, if you have done wrong."

"I don't think I have done any wrong, ma'am."

"Then why do you cry if you are sure of that?"

"Because Mrs. Nurse found it, and she is sure to make the worst of it; and no one will believe me against her. And oh, Miss Grey, I am afraid you will send me away, and you will never have anything to do with me again; and I could not bear to leave you, ma'am; it's that that troubles me."

"No, Martha. Suspicions are strong against you, but I can make allowance for a sudden temptation; and I should be very sorry to send you away, poor child; I would rather help you to repent of your sin and grow better. So tell me how it was that you came to take the pencil-case."

"I did not take it, ma'am; I am quite sure I didn't. Miss Agatha showed me it once, oh, a long time ago now; and I had never seen it again till I found it in my workbox this afternoon."

"But why didn't you bring it at once to Miss Agatha?"

"I thought I would wait till some time when nurse wasn't there, for I was afraid of her. I see now, ma'am, I had better have mentioned it at once; but I thought nurse would think I had stolen it, and I did not want her to know anything about it. I don't suppose any one will believe me, but I did not take it."

"Then how did it come into your box, Martha?"

"I don't know, ma'am, unless somebody put it there."

"I don't know of any one the least likely to have done it," said Millicent, thoughtfully. "But now, Martha, look into my face and tell me once again that you are innocent."

Martha raised her eyes and repeated that she knew nothing whatever of the pencil-case until she found it in her box.

"Little Martha, I cannot look into your heart,

but there is One who can, One who is looking down upon you now. Does He see and know that you are speaking the truth?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Martha, scarcely above her breath, but fervently and reverently.

"Very well, I believe you, Martha. I do not think you would tell me a deliberate untruth; and though, certainly, appearances are against you, I believe your word before them."

Martha seized Miss Grey's hand and covered it with kisses.

"Oh, dear ma'am, thank you for saying so! I made sure you would think it all true that nurse said, and I couldn't bear to grieve you. I don't care for anything now, so long as you think I have not done it."

"But, Martha, very likely other people will think you have, and you may have much to go through until it is all found out, if it ever is. Shall we ask the Lord Jesus to put it into the heart of the real offender to confess?"

"If you please, ma'am."

Millicent knelt, with little Martha beside her, and in a few simple words she asked that the truth might be made plain, and that meanwhile Martha might have grace given to bear patiently any slight put upon her for her suspected fault.

When they rose the tears were still on Martha's cheeks, but a half-smile beamed on her face.

"Please, ma'am," she said softly, "I don't think I shall mind anything now, for I shall know that you know it is all right; and the dear Lord Jesus," she added, in a still lower tone.

"Yes, Martha, all troubles are light if borne for His sake. And they are all needed. 'Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.'"

The last words were spoken to herself more than to Martha.

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## Chapter XIII.—Mr. Jackson's Spectacles.

But if Millicent believed Martha's word, she was almost the only one in the house who did.

Agatha openly declared that she had known from the first that some one had taken her property, and she had fixed on the right person too, she said, with a feeling of pride in her own discernment. She was not quite so careless as to leave what she valued so much throwing about for any one to tread on; it was not the least likely, though aunt Millicent seemed to think it was. And Martha should do nothing more for her. Aunt Millicent should see that she could wait on herself.

And from being almost incapable of carrying even the lightest article from one room to another, Agatha could now, when occasion required, run upstairs several times a day for what she wanted. Her drawers, too, for a few days were as tidy as any one could wish, for she was not going to have people poking about after her treasures, she said, under pretence of putting her things straight.

Millicent hoped it might help Agatha to form better habits, but she was very sorry for Martha. Martha bore up bravely for a day or two, but after that she looked miserable, as if the slightest thing would make her cry; and indeed she often did cry when there was no one there to see or hear.

For she was treated like a black sheep in the nursery. Nurse hardly ever spoke to her except she was actually obliged; and then it was in a cold, far-off sort of way, that made the poor child so nervous and trembling that she could scarcely do her work. And things were put out of her way in a manner that was very painful..

But one thing Martha could not stand. It was when little Eva held up her finger, and with a solemn shake of her head exclaimed,—

"Go away, naughty thief! go away!"

Eva had heard Agatha use the word, and it had clung to her childish memory.

Martha's head went down on the table, and she burst into loud, uncontrolled crying.

Hugh glanced round to see that nurse was not looking, and then he went up to her, and putting his arm round her neck, and his soft young face close to hers, whispered,—

"Eva is very naughty; it is not true what she said, I know, Martha, and auntie knows. Don't cry."

"Leave Martha alone, and come here, Master Hugh," said nurse, severely. "I am glad to see that she can cry—that she has some sorrow for what she has done, though it is not enough to make her confess, it seems."

But Hugh's words had been some comfort to Martha. She sat up, dried her eyes, and took her work again; and the catching sob in her breath alone told that her trouble was not over. And Martha had another source of comfort. Millicent's teaching had not been in vain, and she knew whither to go for help; if she had not she could hardly have got through those days.

Millicent was exceedingly sorry for her. She did not know if she were doing the wisest thing in keeping her; but if she were to be sent away her character would probably be ruined. And indeed she feared the thing was known already, for all the servants treated Martha as if she were guilty. Millicent questioned everybody over and over again if they could throw any light upon the mystery, but of course the answer was always no, for, except Arnold, no one could; and he contrived to evade the question, or at least Agatha did for him, by exclaiming,—

"Oh, I asked the boys long since, and of course they knew nothing. You need not ask everybody over again, auntie, for nobody can tell you anything but Martha, and she will not, it seems."

Even Mr. Grey began to think that his sister was being imposed upon by Martha. The probabilities were that Martha was guilty; and he summoned her to the study, and talked to her gravely and seriously; but Martha could do

nothing but cry, and repeat that she knew nothing of the pencil-case till she found it; if she had taken it she would say so at once. And so the whole thing was a mystery, and seemed likely to remain so. But there was a miserable, uncomfortable feeling over everybody, and all because Arnold was too proud to confess that he had told an untruth.

Yes, that was it. If only he had not so stupidly denied all knowledge of it to Agatha, he could have told everything else. His mischievous act towards Martha seemed light in comparison, but he had always been taught to shun a lie, and he knew how grieved his father was by anything approaching to one.

But Arnold's reverence for truth was not what it used to be. He could not bear to be behind his companions in anything, nor could he stand being laughed at, and he had two or three times lately been on the verge of falsehood, though he flattered himself he had never told an untruth till that day. And he quite meant now, if aunt Millicent ever asked him again and he had to answer, to tell her all about it.

Yet when Millicent met him abruptly on the stairs with the question, "You are sure you know nothing about this, Arnold?" he burst out with "Of course not, Auntie, how should I?"

And then he hated himself the minute afterwards for having said it. But Johnnie was in the hall below, and how could he confess it all in his hearing? Besides, aunt Millicent's "this" might mean anything.

After all, it was a deal of fuss about nothing. What had he done, pray? Merely played an innocent trick on two foolish girls. He would think no more about it. All the same, he wished he had never seen the tiresome pencil-case, or left it where it was.

But Arnold was not going to let any one see that there was anything amiss. He was in higher spirits than usual, and in his morning visits to the nursery he played such antics and made such commotions as to send Hugh and Eva into the wildest state of excitement, until nurse found them almost beyond her management. But there were no more tricks on Martha, she was left to follow her duties in peace, and her grave face rarely broke into a smile, even at the pranks of the children.

But that quarter of an hour of Arnold's broke the nursery quiet for long enough. Nurse quite dreaded his coming. Once, after many threatenings, she actually turned him out, but he was back again the next minute with Johnnie in his wake; and the noise and din were ten times greater, if possible; so nurse gained nothing by that movement.

Millicent, however, heard the uproar; and when the two boys came jumping down-stairs in their strong boots three steps at a time, she met *them at the bottom.*

"*Arnold dear, you really* must not make so much noise; I am sure your papa does not like it, though he says nothing."

"He cannot hear it, auntie. The study door is shut close."

"Oh yes, he can. And besides, you make those two little children so riotous; nurse declares they are almost impossible to manage, and Eva is getting as rough as a boy; she told me so this morning. We shall have to forbid you entering the nursery if this goes on."

"Oh, nurse is cross, auntie; we were only playing."

"Quieter play then it must be, Arnold; you must learn to consider others a little. If I hear any more such commotions I shall banish you for a week; so remember. I cannot have my little pets made naughty by you."

"Oh, auntie, I promised——" Arnold began; then he suddenly stopped. How could he, with that unconfessed sin lying upon his conscience—how was he worthy to mention the name of the angel mother whom he so reverenced and loved still?

"You promised what, dear?" asked his aunt.

"Oh, never mind, auntie. I dare say we were making an awful row; but I don't want to spoil Eva any more than you do.—Come, Johnnie, it is time we were off."

And catching up his book-bag Arnold made off with rapid strides; and Johnnie had almost to run himself out of breath before he came up with him.

Basil and Ernest were waiting for them by the gate leading from the Hall, and they all went on to Low Marston together, as they generally did.

Arnold was unusually silent that morning; perhaps the remembrance of his dead mother had sobered him. At all events, he scarcely spoke a word all the way as they went. At last Basil said to Johnnie,—

"What has come to Arnold this morning? is he in the sulks, or what?"

"Havn't you noticed," put in Ernest, before Johnnie could answer, "that Arnold is subject to fits of high and low spirits? a sort of ague; one day cold and the next hot. Yesterday the hot fit was on, for he made us split our sides with laughing; and I could hardly keep my countenance over our history lesson, for I could not help remembering his remark on old Jackson,—'He is exactly like a little bantam cock strutting about. I wonder Dr. Waybridge keeps him; but I dare say he won't stay more than his quarter out. Mason will be better, and come back by then.' Now to-day it is the cool depressed stage, and not a word or smile do we get."

"You do dearly love to hear yourself talk, Ernest."

"You never spoke a truer word than that Basil; I do. And I don't care who knows it; what have we got tongues for if they are not to use? though apparently Arnold thinks his will wear out before he has done with it if he is too lavish in the use thereof."

All this Arnold heard, but did not speak; not even in answer to Basil's cool, taunting speech.

"We shall not miss anything. Arnold's conversation is not always of the most instructive nature. His spelling, at any rate, is not first-class."

Ernest burst into a loud laugh; for it was only the day before that Arnold had been turned back for some most evident mistakes in spelling.

Arnold's cheeks flushed, but still he said nothing. But Johnnie spoke up for him.

"Don't, Ernest. It is cruel to laugh at poor Arnold for what he could not help. How could he tell that 'slaughter' had a *gh* in the middle of it? I should have spelt it 'slau' myself."

"Well done, Johnnie! aunt Millicent has taught you that, I suppose." And again Ernest laughed; what at, Johnnie could not tell.

Arnold spoke then.

"You are not fit to hold a candle to aunt Millicent," he said.

"I don't want to hold a candle to her. I dare say she would not thank me."

"Ernest, hold your tongue!" came sternly from Basil, enforced by a by no means gentle grasp of the shoulder.

"Don't, Basil! you hurt me!" said Ernest, reddening, as he shook himself free.

"Leave Miss Grey alone then. If some of us listened to her teaching we should be a great deal better than we are sometimes."

"Auntie is very good," said Johnnie, looking up with a smile, "and she loves us."

"See you love her, then; but don't talk about her here," was the still stern answer of Basil.

Arnold was sorry his want of spirits had been remarked on by his companions, for he was afraid it might lead to some questions which would be difficult to answer; but he was determined they should not have any further reason to complain of him that morning.

It was the fashion in the school just now to make fun of the new master; he was only there temporarily in the place of Mr. Mason, who had been obliged to leave ill, and who was a general favourite with everybody; so of course, by mutual consent, his successor was looked upon with dislike.

Arnold had given no bad description of Mr. Jackson when he said he was like a bantam. He was a very small specimen of mankind, and would walk about on the tip of his toes to make himself an inch taller if possible. And, moreover, his sight was so bad that he could not tell in the least what was going on without his spectacles; but with them, woe betide any boy that was up to the smallest amount of mischief! he was pounced upon at once.

Therefore those spectacles were held in great abhorrence, and each boy in turn had declared he would break them somehow or somewhere; but as yet the threat had not been put into execution; either there had been no opportunity, or else the heart of the daring offender had failed at the last moment. Mr. Jackson and his spectacles had not yet parted company, and the owner was in happy ignorance of any design upon his valuable possession.

Arnold, however, had resolved that this morning should be the last for those tormenting glass eyes; but it was not till afternoon that the opportunity he wished for occurred.

Arnold's class was called up for a parsing lesson; he was somewhere about the middle of it, but he purposely made mistakes in order to get down to the bottom, that he might be close to Mr. Jackson. Ernest, who was in the same class, stared in surprise, for he knew that generally Arnold could do far better than that; but Arnold threw back a glance defiantly, as much as to say that he knew what he was doing.

And he put up his book suddenly in such a manner that—was it by accident?—the corner of the cover caught the offending spectacles, just as Mr. Jackson was bending his head forward in the act of saying something very impressively, and knocked them off! Arnold expected they would fall to the floor, and hoped they would break. But the master caught them, and turned upon Arnold with a sharp reprimand for his careless awkwardness.

A titter ran through the class, for they had all seen through Arnold's manœuvre, and how it had failed.

But Arnold was not to be driven from his purpose by one failure. A few minutes afterwards a violent fit of sneezing and coughing seized Mr. Jackson, and the spectacles were taken off and laid on the desk for a minute. Arnold's hand was quietly, stealthily raised to the desk, and the coveted prize was his; but before he could convey them to a place of secrecy and security, to be broken up at his leisure, the voice of the head master, Dr. Waybridge, was heard from the other end of the room,—

"What are you doing there, Grey?"

Arnold did not know he was present, or he certainly would not have attempted to execute his little plan; for Dr. Waybridge's glance was keen enough without artificial aid to discern if anything went wrong. The question so startled him that he dropped the spectacles on the floor, and they fell against the leg of a form and broke. So the wished-for end was attained; Mr. Jackson and his spectacles had parted company.

Dr. Waybridge's rapid stride soon brought him to the scene of action. Mr. Jackson told him what he knew of Arnold's behaviour, and also how many mistakes he had made in his lesson; and as Arnold had nothing to say in his own defence, Dr. Waybridge sentenced him to be kept behind when afternoon school closed, and to learn ten lines of Latin poetry; and also that he was to pay out of his own pocket-money for the mending of the spectacles.

So that was what Arnold gained by his desire to show that his high spirits and love of mischief were not on the wane.

# THE TRUE HISTORY OF MY PETS.

## TOLD TO THE LITTLE ONES.

### IN THREE PARTS.—PART II.

"MADAM the canary, and Fairy the goldfinch—they were very tame birds, and knew me well. I often carried their cages about the garden with me to give them an airing.

"One day I let Fairy fly loose in the room, and she would not come back to her cage as easily as usual. Some one advised me to shut the shutters, so that she could not see to fly much, and then to catch her in a handkerchief. This I did, but the bird broke loose from my hand, and the fire being the only light, she flew straight on to the hot bars."

"Oh, don't tell us any more of this story," said Lily. "Poor *dear* little dicky!"

"But she was not killed, Lily. I thought she must be burnt to death, so that I only screamed and hid my face, but one of the servants took her up and showed her to me. Her feathers were nearly all singed off, her tail quite burnt away, and her poor little feet in the saddest plight, being merely *stumps*, all the claws having disappeared They thought poor Fairy had better be put out of her misery, but I could not bear to have her put to death, so I begged hard for her life, and then put her in soft wool at the bottom of her cage, put a little food and water near her, and hung the cage in partial darkness. After a couple of days I was rewarded by hearing a feeble chirp, so I took off the cover. The next day she tried to get on to her perch, but I had to get it made broader, and the others also, after a time; for though the poor bird's feet *healed*, yet she never had any claws to hold on with again. Her feathers were renewed after a time, and she regained her health, and lived a happy little life of seven years longer.

"Madam died at eight years old, and 'Bully' also. His death was attributed to a fit, from overfeeding on hemp seed, of which he was very fond, but he was by that time very feeble from age.

"We had two turtle-doves for nearly fifteen years; they were tame, gentle little creatures. At one time one of them escaped, and we could see it from time to time in one of the tallest trees. At last we brought out the cage containing its mate, and in a short time it came down and hovered about it till we managed to catch it again.

"I do not think there is anything remarkable to tell you about our other birds."

"Oh, then do tell us about your dogs! we like them better even than the birds," they all exclaimed. "Do tell us about them from the very beginning!"

"How many had you, mamma?" said Rosie.

"All my brothers, your uncles, were very fond of dogs, so that sometimes we had as many as eight or nine at a time; and we became quite noted for the hubbub that was created when any one rang our gate bell, or attempted to enter.

"I shall only speak of four of the cleverest of them, three being with us at the same time. Their names were 'Rattler,' 'Bob,' and 'Pluck.' Rattler, whom we had at first as a puppy, evidently considered himself, after he grew up, as quite the leader and head amongst them all. He behaved in a kindly though assured way, much as good-natured big boys at school might treat their fags. He was of a yellowish-red colour, with rather shaggy, wiry hair, and a stump of a tail, short-cropped ears, and piercing eyes, with a good honest look in them. To those who did not know his character, I fear they might have said of him (as one lady *did* say) that he was a *plain* dog; but no one thought of his outward appearance who knew his upright ways, for there are human beings who would be all the better for having some of his qualities. He had quite an idea of honourable dealings. He was naturally fonder of some of his friends than others, and he greatly delighted in a walk; but if he set out with one of those whom he cared least about, and met one of his favourites, he would never forsake the one he was protecting, but after seeing him or her safely home, would look up entreatingly to be allowed to run away; and then, when permission was given, he would scamper away after the other as fast as his legs could carry him.

"Neither would he ever leave a house which one of his friends had entered, unless he was expressly told to go home again. I have known him wait outside a front door for hours when he had been forgotten. On one occasion I went to visit a poor woman, leaving Rattler outside the cottage. For some reason or other she let me out the back way, so that the dog did not see me depart. He remained stationed at the door for many hours, when the old woman seeing him, let him in to see for himself that I was not there, and tried to make him understand I had gone home.

"At last he reluctantly set off for home, but on arriving there could not find me (as I had gone out again). He searched all over the house and garden, and then returned to his post as before, and it was only on my happening to pass that way again that I saw him and brought him home.

"One very cold night in winter, his master, coming home late, found the poor dog half frozen in his kennel. He took him into the kitchen, stirred up the fire, rubbed him, put something for him to lie on, and then went up to bed. Shortly afterwards a scratching was heard at the door, and on its being opened, in bounded Rattler, who showed every demonstration of affection and gratitude, and then asked to be let out again, and ran down to the kitchen. The dog evidently remembered that he had not thanked his master for what he had done for him.

"We had a low wall in front of the house, with a ditch outside it for protection, but as this ditch was shallow at one end, small boys and others would sometimes stand on the wall and try to get over into the garden. Rattler found this out, and decided it was a thing that must not be. He must have communicated his ideas on the subject to Bob and Pluck, for all three dogs were found one day sitting on the ramparts, and from that time to the day of Rattler's death he spent all his spare time there, generally accompanied by the other dogs which were not kept tied up. They used to sit in a row on the wall, keeping a quiet and meditative look-out, until any one passed on the road, when they would prick up their ears, and if, as was often the case, persons would stop to look at them, they would begin to bristle and show their teeth. Then, if any one was daring enough to brave them, and attempt to throw a stone or to tease them in any way, with a loud bark Rattler would be over the ramparts, followed by his companions, and the enemy would be at once put to flight; when they would return and sit solemnly as before.

"Pluck, who was a terrier, and a chilly dog, and who dearly loved his ease, would often slip away to get back to the fireside; but if Rattler saw him sneaking off he would be down in a moment and make him return.

"Bob was a Swiss terrier, brought from abroad by one of your uncles. He had a thick grey coat and a curly tail, like a Spitz dog, and a most sharp and intelligent face. When first he came he could understand French only. He certainly was not a dog of a genial or sociable character. He was quite indifferent to almost every one, and could not bear the smallest amount of teasing without snapping. He was also possessed of a disagreeable quality, in the way of barking in the shrillest way whenever he was pleased. He would do this incessantly when walking out, and if any strangers in passing told him to be quiet he would follow them, barking worse than ever. No punishment had ever any effect in breaking him of this trick. But though Bob was not a dog of a *generally* affectionate nature, yet to two persons he gave his whole heart, and loved them with the attachment of a human being. For a long time after he was brought to England he would scarcely let any one but his master touch him. He would run about by himself all day, and sometimes go distances quite alone, whilst his master was away engaged in business, but at least an hour before he was expected home the dog would ensconce himself on the mat by the front door, and nothing would induce him to move. As soon as his master appeared he would literally 'jump for joy,' and never leave him till he left for town again the next morning.

"The one other person he truly cared for was your grandmamma, and the way in which he became attached to her was curious, and showed that he had strong feelings of gratitude. Bob was subject to fits at times, which caused him to tumble about and to foam at the mouth. The servants, not knowing how to manage him, would often drench him in water or put him in a tub, and the poor dog was often hurt by knocking himself against things, as they were afraid of holding him, for fear of being bitten. One evening he was in the drawing-room, and as he seemed uneasy, I was just opening the door to let him out to find his master, when he saw a line of servants just coming in to prayers. He staggered back, seemed irresolute, and then in a kind of desperation jumped on the sofa behind your grandmamma. As he began to tremble violently she put her arm round him, and held him close to her to prevent him falling off, whilst your grandpapa, not noticing him went on reading. Soon after prayers were over he got down from the sofa, shook himself, and left the room. When grandmamma went upstairs she found Bob waiting for her at the door of her bedroom. He showed every demonstration of joy at seeing her, licked her hands, jumped up, and was with difficulty removed. It was the more remarkable, as he had never cared for her in the least before. The next morning he was at her door again before she was up, and from that time showed the most unfailing affection for her. She was an invalid, and often kept her room. Bob soon found out if she was ill, and would lie outside her door, waiting for some one to go in, when he would slip in also. On account of his joyful barking when he saw her, he made such a noise that we often tried to get him away again, but it was a dangerous thing to try to carry him off, for he would snarl and bite any one who attempted to touch him, and would frequently remain all day trying to get in. I have sometimes seen the tears literally run down his face when he has been taken up and carried away to be tied up. It would not have been done if he would have been quiet in the sick room, but he would sometimes start up and bark in the middle of the night if he heard his mistress move. He died at the age of sixteen, never really attaching himself to any but those two, though I think he had a certain amount of liking for my mother's maid, but I believe this was only that he might through her get oftener to his mistress.

## A VISIT TO THE COUNTRY.

### A Monosyllabic Sketch.

I will now, my dear friend, give you a short sketch of a trip I had last month, and tell you of the scenes I went through, and the high hills and deep vales I met with in my jaunt. My time was, for the most part, spent in the green fields, where the young corn waves, and light and shade pass by it with each wind that blows, and so makes glad the heart of man.

All is life and stir. The new-mown hay sheds its sweet scent all round, the fruits of the earth are rich with bloom, and the plants and herbs yield their sweets: From morn till eve the birds sing out with notes so sweet and glad that the "heart leaps up with joy" when it thinks the good God has made such sights and sounds to cheer us as we plod on our way from day to day through this "vale of tears."

Then, too, what joy there is for one who tries to read *God's* books from all he sees *in life!* Not a bird that soars on high but has its song of praise, not a fly or gnat that wings its flight through the air but has a charm for those who seek God in His works.

Then I saw the sun sink to rest, and, as it were, dip and bathe in a flood of gold light. Well may we say with awe, "We know not *now*, nor may it be known in this life, the length and breadth and height of the ways and works of God!"

Sweet scents are borne on the breeze—sweet sounds are heard on all sides—we feel, in fact, that "God is there," and see "His works," that they are "good."

I might tire you to tell you of all the sights we saw, of things so rare and strange to one who has spent the chief part of his life in a town. Oh the joy to feel free to breathe the pure air, and tread the soft turf of the downs—to feast our eyes on the golden furze, and rich dark heath with all its tints and hues, with here and there a peep of rocks, and stones grown grey with the beat of the rough winds of long years!

Then how good to walk by the side of the stream, and watch the gold trout leap and play in the warmth of the sun at noon! But I feel sure I shall tire you, so will at once mount the dark ridge of hills near us, and tell you what is to be seen from thence.

The sky is blue and clear, and the view at morn when the mist rolls off, is grand in the full sense of the word; there lay the sea, and as the day was calm, and the wind blew soft, the face of the "great deep" was spread out, smooth and clear and still.

Both ships and boats pass up and down from place to place, and may there not be those on board who have been for long, long years, far, far from their dear ones, and whose hearts long sore to see once more the dear old forms of their own bright homes?

Look where one would, the eye met sights of joy! Oh, none can tell how great the treat to those pent up in a town, with nought but "man's works" to gaze at; to feel (if but for one day) the free, pure air and fresh breeze, and with full rest from toil to view God's work, for in truth "man made the town, God the green fields and trees."

I scarce knew how to leave such scenes, but "tide and time wait for no man;" the day was *done, the gloom of* eve drew nigh, we were fain *to say "good-bye," to each* and all "good night," for the train would make its voice heard, in spite of the song of birds, or laugh of the wild waves.

CHARLES BENNETT.

## ENIGMA.

My first is in the starry skies, yet not in night is seen;
My second, oft with honour found, with truth has ever been;
My third that comes with gentlest winds, in summer is not known;
Without my fourth earth's happiness we could not call our own;
My fifth is in the humble home, and in the aching heart;
And in the chiefest aims of life my sixth doth take a part.
In woodland haunt, in lonely glen, my seventh you will see,
And in each care or brightest hope my eighth is sure to be;
On desert plain on sea, and shore, to gladden all around,
And by our hearths a household word, my welcome whole is found.

KATE W.

## BURIED ENGLISH BATTLES.

1. He is a bad boy, never speak to him.
2. When she has done her lessons, then I let her play till dinner-time.
3. Your aunt and uncle we saw yesterday, Edith.
4. It was through disobedience he got such a sting, so I hope he will never forget it.
5. On the other side of the hedge hills and trees can only be seen.
6. Look at that strange animal, mamma.
7. This lace is very rare and antique, because the kind is not made now.
8. He will fall into the water, look how near the bank he is.
9. You have hemmed that sleeve shamefully, Maud.
10. Let us hide in the barn, Ethel, they will never find us.

MEYNELLA W.

## THE FLOWER SERMON.

We hope our dear friends will not forget that this will be preached at St. Katherine Cree Church, Leadenhall Street, on Whit-Tuesday Evening, June 6th, and that if they wish to find seats they must be at the church soon after six o'clock, bringing with them each a bouquet. We shall be glad to speak to any dear *Sunshine* readers who wish to exchange a friendly greeting with us.

# SUNSHINE.

EDITED BY W. M. WHITTEMORE, D.D., RECTOR OF ST. KATHERINE CREE, LONDON.

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[FAITH ABSORBED IN HER BOOK.]

## LITTLE ALINE.

### A STORY OF GIPSY LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PET'S DIFFICULTIES."

### CHAPTER XIX.—GOING SHARES.

RALPH came back to Aline just as the old gentleman was departing, and he naturally wondered what had passed between them.

"Curious old cove, that!" he exclaimed; "What was he saying to you, Aline?"

"Something about being saved; I'm sure I don't know what he meant, for I'm not lost, as I knows of," said Aline, laughing.

"He's a little cracked, I should think," answered the boy.

"Or perhaps he's a 'Christian,'" suggested Aline, "for he spoke about Jesus, and he gave me this little book."

She held the Testament towards Ralph, who took it more respectfully than he would otherwise have done, because it was nicely bound, and the edges were gilt.

"What's the good of giving you such rubbish?" he said, gruffly. "As if we wanted any of their stupid books! Here goes!" he added, and he was about to fling it over a paling close by, when Aline caught hold of his arm and prevented him.

"It's my book" she said, "and you've no business to throw it away."

"Haven't I, though? we shall see about that," he retorted; and before Aline could again hinder him, he had tossed the offending little volume out of sight.

If one of my readers had been in Aline's position, she would probably have either cried, or have struck Ralph a blow, or have threatened to complain of him at home. But Aline, without uttering a word, sprang over the fence with the agility of a young squirrel, and returned in a minute with the book in her hand.

"There! I've got it, and I mean to keep it!" she cried, triumphantly.

"Keep it if you like, and much good may it do you," said Ralph, contemptuously. "Perhaps you are going to become a 'Christian!'"

"Perhaps I am," she said in the same tone; "anyhow, I shall not ask your leave about it. I don't care the least bit about you!"

"Nor I for you; so we're quits," said the boy, coolly.

They went on for a few minutes in silence; Ralph, a little in advance, cutting a stick with his knife, and Aline examining her Testament.

Aline spoke first, and as good temperedly as if not an angry word had been said on either side. Putting her book into her pocket, and quickening her step so as to be in a line with Ralph, she said, "You don't know what you've lost, Ralph."

"I know what you've lost,—your temper," answered Ralph.

"Well, *you* did not find it, that's certain," said Aline, merrily. "See what I've got, Ralph" and she showed him the half-crown, partly concealed in her hand.

The sight of silver roused Ralph in an instant from his indifference.

"I say! where did you pick that up, Aline?"

"Ah, that's telling!" she said, enjoying his surprise.

"Well, but how did you come by it?" he persisted.

"Fairly and honestly, which is more than can be said of some of your gettings, Mr. Ralph."

The lad's face darkened, and Aline not wishing to provoke him, for he always stood by her in any emergency, said quickly, "That gentleman gave it me, the same as gave me the little book."

"Bless the old chap! whatever made him do it?"

"You had better ask him. *Other* folks admire my pretty books, if you doesn't," she said, pointedly.

"*Handsome is,* that handsome *does,*" said *Ralph. "If you let me go* shares with you, I'll *flatter you to your heart's* content."

"I don't want flattery," she said, half-sorrowfully, "I want somebody really to care for me, and to help me."

"Help you in what? in spending your money? couldn't have a handier fellow than myself for that."

Aline laughed, and forgot her momentary sadness; and she and Ralph were soon busily planning how they could most advantageously use up the half-crown; for Aline was a generous little girl, and usually allowed Ralph to have the lion's share of whatever fell to her lot. It was not often that so large a sum as half-a-crown was at her disposal; but if the old gentleman had given her twenty half-crowns instead of one Ralph would not have found any difficulty in parting with them. Aline agreed to let Ralph have eighteenpence of this money, reserving a shilling for her own use, which was to be spent, as occasion might require, in new rolls and German sausages, when the fare at home was more scanty or less tempting than usual.

Aline was not of a reserved disposition, and she was naturally truthful, but she had learnt that it was not always wise to speak the *whole* truth, and therefore, while she told Ralph about the half-crown you will notice that she said not a word to him about the half-sovereign which she had given back to its owner. She knew how he would have laughed at her scruples about keeping it, and how her uncle and aunt, had they known of it, would have scolded her for her folly, and perhaps have beaten her; so it is not to be wondered at that Aline never mentioned this part of the affair to any one.

The shilling was soon spent; but the old gentleman and his half-sovereign were sometimes brought to her recollection by the little book which she preserved amongst her few treasures. Its pretty blue cover, and shining leaves, made it valuable in her eyes, but it was a *hidden* treasure, as to its real worth, for Aline was ignorant of the "good news" that it contained. She could read a little, but it was so imperfectly that she could not make much sense out of the words that she with difficulty spelt to herself; and therefore the small Testament seldom saw daylight, and was very rarely opened.

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## Chapter XX.—Faith's Realizations

Soon after Faith came to the farm, Ethel ran into the room one morning, as soon as she was dressed, to invite her to go out and see the cows milked. Faith knew very little about country ways and doings, and her extreme ignorance sometimes provoked a smile from those around her. But Faith could bear being laughed at, though she sometimes told Ethel that perhaps the sights and sounds of the great city would be as strange to her as country scenes were to a Londoner.

Faith was sitting by the window when Ethel went in. The fresh, sweet air came softly through the little casement, and sent a tinge of colour into Faith's pale cheek. She was reading, and reading so intently that she did not hear Ethel's light step as she stole gently behind, and placed her hand over Faith's eyes.

"Guess who it is, Faith."

It did not require much skill to guess who the intruder was.

"How you startled me!" exclaimed Faith, as Ethel laughingly withdrew her hand.

"Yes, because you were so lost in your book; what ever were you reading so eagerly at this time of the day?"

Ethel answered her own question, for she had scarcely asked it when she saw that the book was a Bible.

"The Bible! Do you read the Bible *every* day?"

"Yes," said Faith, with a slight tone of surprise in her voice.

"I don't; I read two or three chapters on Sunday, and that lasts for the week."

"But you would not be satisfied with your breakfast once in a week," said Faith.

"No, indeed, but that is a very different thing; I could not live if I did not eat."

"Well, we want food for our souls as well as for our bodies," replied Faith.

"Food for our souls? oh, Faith, how funnily you talk! my soul never feels hungry."

And Ethel laughed at such a comical idea.

"Don't you think that our hearts and our minds need something that satisfies them, just as much as we want food when we are hungry? Why, Miss Ethel, had not you been longing ever since I came here for a letter from your mamma?"

"What has that to do with it, Faith? Of course I was anxious to hear from mamma; I was afraid papa might be worse, as she had not written."

"And when you had your letter were you not delighted?"

"I believe I was," said Ethel, emphatically. She remembered how she had run out to meet the postman as he entered the gate, and how she had been ready to dance for joy as he put an envelope bearing her mother's well-known handwriting into her hand.

"Well, the Bible is a letter to me from my heavenly Father," said Faith. "It comforts me, and makes me feel happy, just as your mamma's letter did you."

"It does not seem a bit like that to me; I never feel any brighter for reading the Bible."

Faith opened her Bible where the mark was. "This is what I was reading just now," she said. She pointed to the twenty-third Psalm, that sweet portion which is so precious both to the aged believer and to the young Christian, to the poor man in his cottage, and to the noble in his mansion. "Do you know, I *felt* so troubled yesterday when you had your letter; I could not help wishing that *my* mother was still living and could write to me."

"Oh, Faith, it was very selfish of me not to think of you," said Ethel.

"No, not at all selfish; it was only right and natural," said Faith. "I should not have told you that I felt lonely and sad if it were not to show you how these words, 'The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want,' suited me. I thought directly, that, though my mother had left me, the Lord was taking care of me, just as a shepherd takes care of the weak, silly little sheep, and that He would never let me want anything that was for my good."

"How clever you are, Faith! Such thoughts would never have entered into my head."

"And yet I have understood the Psalm so much better since I came here, and saw a real shepherd and a flock of sheep! Uncle Philip told me that his shepherd counts all his sheep every night, for fear one should be missing; and that if one strays he seeks for it directly, for that it would never find the way back of itself. And don't you recollect that we met him on Monday, carrying a little lamb in his arm because it was weak and sickly?"

"Yes, but he often does that," said Ethel.

"It was new to me, you see; and it at once reminded me of that verse about Jesus,—'He shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom.' Oh, it's so nice to feel He is kind and gentle like that, because I am so shy and so easily frightened."

"I never heard anybody talk about our Saviour as you do," said Ethel.

"In what way do you mean?" asked Faith.

"Why, in such a common way; no, I don't mean common, I mean familiar; it seems just as if He were a dear friend of yours, to whom you can say anything."

"So I can," said Faith; "I tell Him everything as freely as I used to tell mother; and it lightens my heart so. But I am keeping you waiting, Miss Ethel."

"We are just in time, Faith, for I can hear Will bringing the cows into the yard now."

Faith had never seen cows milked before, and was greatly interested in the performance. It appeared very easy work, but when Patty set the pail under Daisy, the quietest of the lot, and invited Faith to try her hand at it, she found it more difficult than she had expected. The milk came so slowly; she had not the knack that Patty had of drawing it out; and Daisy evidently knew the difference of the touch, for she was inclined to be rather restive, and once almost knocked the pail over. Oh, how delicious the glass of new milk, fresh from the cow, was to the town-bred girl! she had never before tasted anything like it.

As they went into the house for breakfast, Ethel said archly, "I don't think there is anything in the Bible about milk, Faith."

Faith smiled. "Yes, there is, Miss Ethel; the Bible itself is compared to milk;" and she quoted the text, "Desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

"Oh, Faith, you are as bad as Mr. Cleveland! What do you think Miss Cleveland said to me one day about him? 'My dear,' she said, 'I call my brother a walking concordance, for I believe he knows where every text is in the Bible.'"

Both girls laughed at this comparison; but Faith's love for her Bible made an impression on Ethel's mind which was never lost.

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## Chapter XXI.—An Answer to Prayer.

It happened that when Ethel expected a letter from her mamma again, she was disappointed. There was not one for her, and though she tried to wait patiently till the next mail should come in, and to believe, as Margaret persuaded her, that there was nothing the matter, but that her mamma had been in some way hindered from writing, yet she could not help feeling now and then rather uneasy. For in the letter she had last received Mrs. Raymond had mentioned having a pain in her chest, the effect of a severe cold caught in descending a lofty mountain during a heavy shower of rain; and though at the time Ethel had not thought seriously about it, she began now to fear that perhaps her mamma was very ill, and unable to write.

And when the weeks passed, and there was still no letter for Ethel, even Margaret began to be anxious, and to speak to Philip about making inquiry somewhere. Ethel fretted a good deal, for she loved her mother very much, and was alarmed at the mere supposition of losing her. She was an imaginative child, and pictured all sorts of terrible things in connection with Mrs. Raymond; and once or twice she woke up in the middle of the night crying violently, because she dreamt that some shocking accident had occurred to her.

Faith said all she could to console her, and she did all that was in her power to amuse her and to divert her thoughts; and Margaret was thankful that her niece was at the farm to be thus helpful to her.

Ethel was reading a story-book one evening. She wished to finish it before the light faded, and therefore stood close by the window, for the print was rather small. Faith, seeing that she was not wanted, laid down her work, and ran upstairs to fetch a little box of curiosities, which she had promised to show Ethel. Presently Ethel came to the last page of her book, and she looked round for Faith. She stayed by herself for a few minutes, and then feeling rather dull, she went to Faith's room to find her. Just as she reached the door she heard some one speaking, and wondered who could be there with Faith, for Margaret was out with her husband. She stopped an instant to listen, and heard that Faith was praying, and praying for her.

Praying without a book, too! Ethel's astonishment was so great that it fixed her to the spot.

"O Lord, pity poor Miss Ethel, and if it please Thee, do let her have a letter soon from her mamma. She wants one so badly, and she cannot bear much trouble; and I know that Thou art able to do everything that we ask Thee. And Lord, I do ask Thee that, if it is Thy will, a letter may come for her to-morrow, or in a day or two, that she may be cheered, and that we may——"

This was all that Ethel heard, for she thought it was not right to listen longer; and she crept softly back to the parlour with a sort of pleasant awe on her mind, which she could scarcely have described in words. How strange to tell God about such a little thing as a letter! Yet how nice to speak to Him as a Friend that was close at hand, and was ready to help! But would He really notice what a young girl and a poor girl like Faith said to Him? Faith evidently seemed to expect that He would, but Ethel could scarcely believe that it was possible. She thought she would wait for a day or so, and then ask Faith about it.

But as Faith and Ethel were in the garden gathering some peas the next morning, the postman, who was earlier than usual, walked up to Ethel and gave her a letter bearing a foreign postmark.

"A letter from mamma!" cried Ethel. "Oh, Faith, I wonder whether it is an answer to your prayer?"

Faith blushed and looked surprised, as well she might, but she would not interrupt Ethel until she had read the welcome epistle, which contained a satisfactory reason for her mamma's silence, and had been in to tell Margaret of its arrival. Then, before she had time to ask Ethel for an explanation, Ethel of her own accord related how she had overheard part of Faith's prayer, and how strange it had seemed to her.

"And do you really think that God gives you what you ask Him, Faith?"

"If it is good for me He does; and if He says 'No,' then I am sure that He knows what is best for me."

"And are you always contented?"

"Ah, no, Miss Ethel; I *ought* to be, and I do try to be, but sometimes I complain because I cannot have my own way."

Whether Ethel believed that her letter had arrived in answer to Faith's prayer or not I do not know, but from that day she was more willing to hear Faith talk about good things, and she agreed to read the Bible with her every morning.

At first, perhaps, it was more from a wish to please Faith, because she wanted to be kind to her as she had no mother; but gradually Ethel began to take an interest in God's word for herself, and to love that Saviour of whom its pages are so full. It was the attractive picture of Him as the

tender Shepherd, carrying the lambs in His arms, which had drawn Ethel's heart towards Him without her being aware of it; and many a happy half-hour she now spent with Faith on a Sunday afternoon, searching out all the texts in the Bible which bear on this sweet subject.

Faith led a very happy, but not by any means an idle life at the farm. It is true she was not strong, and could not do much without being very tired, but there was plenty in the house that she could attend to without over-exerting herself. The vegetables for the dinner and the fruit for the pies were always left to her care; she dusted the sitting-room and washed up the tea and breakfast things, and took her share of mending the stockings and linen. So handy was she in this and other ways, that Margaret sometimes said she did not know how she had hitherto managed without her help.

The farm life was indeed a very busy life. Indoors and out of doors, each had their work to do, and were expected to do it. "If any man would not work, neither should he eat;" that seemed to be the motive given to all for their guidance, and both master and mistress set the example which their servants were to follow.

Faith and Ethel had been down to one of the cottages to carry a nice piece of pudding for a little child just recovering from an illness, and as they returned, a tall woman was coming towards them from the opposite direction. Her black hair, tawny complexion, and gaudy attire showed directly that she belonged to the gipsy race.

"Look, Faith, here is a real gipsy at last! Now you cannot say that you have never seen one."

Faith looked eagerly at the woman as she approached, but when the new-comer fixed her large dark eyes steadily on her in return, Faith shrank, she hardly knew why, from her gaze. There was a boldness and defiance in her expression which was anything but agreeable. Still, she spoke to them in a fawning manner.

"Good evening, my pretty misses; let me tell you your fortune."

"No, thank you; we don't wish to hear them," said Ethel,

"My bonnie young lady, you little guess what wonderful things are in store for you. Just let me look at the palm of your hand, and read what's written there."

Ethel shook her head, and Faith answered,—

"But you do not know any more about the future than we do."

"Indeed I do," said the gipsy, solemnly. "I could tell you things, my dear, that would make the very hairs on your head stand upright."

"It is very wicked for any one to pretend to foretell events; only God knows what is to happen," said Faith.

"You need not preach to me," said the gipsy, scornfully. "A lame girl like you, dependent on charity, with not a copper to call your own; as if it is likely you're worth listening to! I should advise you to earn your own bread before you talk to me about the way in which I get mine."

With a wrathful look at the two girls the gipsy turned suddenly aside into a narrow path leading to the mill bridge, and in a minute or two was hidden from their sight.

## A SUMMER IN WALES.

We had often spent a fortnight or so at Llysfaen, but last year mamma decided on passing the whole summer there; so instead of going to lodgings as we had always done before, we took a cottage all to ourselves; and though it was so tiny that we could hardly cram our large party into it, we all thought it far pleasanter than being in one of the regular lodging-houses, where there might have been other parties. Besides, we meant to live almost entirely out of doors, and a little roughing it added to the zest of our enjoyment.

The line had been opened to Llysfaen since we were last in the neighbourhood, which made the journey much easier; but when, on reaching the station, we saw three new houses close by, we felt rather disgusted, and began to fear that the dear old place was losing its primitive aspect. Mamma consoled us, however, by pointing out that though the railroad had brought in its *train* (no pun intended) an increase of civilization, and its inevitable accompaniments, bricks and mortar, or what stands in the place thereof in this locality, viz., slate, the natural beauties of this favoured spot were too great to be destroyed by men's handiwork.

On the first evening we could scarcely wait till after tea to go down to the river, and we gave mamma no peace until we started.

The bridge that crosses the Flwydd is curiously built, its centre arch springs from rocks on either side, which thus form natural piers; the smaller arches are actually on the rocks, and seem useless to those who know the Flwydd only in summer; but the villagers are well aware that in the rainy season it is to these arches they owe the safety of their houses, which otherwise would be washed away by the floods.

Well, we scampered across this bridge, just stopping for an instant to look over the parapet at the water, which tumbling noisily over the massive rocks on the west side of the bridge, glides off so gently on the east that it seems almost stagnant. We were soon in the wood, through which we literally *forced* our way, for the branches and brambles make it very dense in some parts, and at length emerging into a delightful meadow, we rushed helter-skelter down to the river.

The boys dabbled about to their heart's content, and our old dog, forgetful of his years, behaved like a young puppy, wading in the water, plunging after imaginary bones, and then issuing dripping from his bath, and affectionately shaking

himself in the immediate vicinity of mamma's bonnet as she sat on the bank.

We had always thought Llysfaen more beautiful than dreamland, and only a shade less enchanting than fairy-land; and as we sat at the water's edge, enjoying the sights and sounds that belong to a summer evening in the country, we felt more than ever convinced of it, and our hearts were filled with gratitude to the good God who had made the earth so fair.

For six weeks we had not one wet day, so that when people say Llysfaen is a rainy place we never believe them. A friend of ours told us that he had heard that an old woman who had died lately went on a visit to Llysfaen when quite a girl, with the understanding that she should return home the first fine day, but it never came, and she waited on and on, till at the mature age of seventy-five she died! Of course we all declared it was a most unfounded libel, but as it happened to rain the day our friend came to Llysfaen, he evidently came to the conclusion that it was *always* raining there, and we could not persuade him to the contrary.

But *revenons à nos moutons*, how we did enjoy that glorious weather! We varied our walks every day except when it was too hot for much exertion, and then we sat on rocks in the middle of the stream, and lazily read or chatted. We had no end of fun too, and must have been rather a noisy party occasionally.

Of course the boys were eager to become fishermen, and having made themselves rods, and attached to them string and hook, they considered there was little else required to make them so. One of them baited his hook with a beetle, and felt confident of success; but all he caught was Shot's tail, in which the hook became entangled! Mamma said she admired the faith of juvenile anglers, who are not troubled with the misgivings of older and more experienced sportsmen as to weather, and have no fears about the trout "taking short."

The wild flowers were most abundant, and there was no lack of fruit, too, for we could always find a dessert of wild raspberries and strawberries. We often marvelled at the wealth of beauty in the scenery around us. Every moss-covered stone, with its background of ferns and foxgloves, was a picture in itself, and deserved to be immortalized by the pencil of an artist.

Our great delight was to sit in the shade of the pine woods, while mamma read aloud to us.

In connection with this we have a great joke against one of the boys. Something had happened to ruffle his serenity; possibly it was the heat, but at all events, when we expressed our horror of the Spaniards, of whose atrocities in the Netherlands under Philip, mamma was reading in Parley's Annual, he, to the surprise of us all, defended them, and declared he liked the Spaniards. Mamma, to our amusement, instead of endeavouring to make *him alter his opinion, quietly* prescribed a dose of physic for him, declaring that such a vitiated taste must proceed from indigestion.

The only drawback to our pleasure at this season was the way in which we were victimized by gnats and other insects, of which there was an extraordinary variety. It is a pity we were not professional entomologists, for our little enemies settled upon our hands in a most audacious manner, and while puncturing the skin gave us ample time to examine their peculiarities.

The drought lasted for so long that at last there was little water in the river, and we began to wonder if it sank much more what would become of the poor trout. The bed of the stream was quite exposed in many places, and very untidy it looked with the rocks all lying higgledy-piggledy, instead of being neatly covered as usual with sheets of clean white foam.

But this state of things had its advantages, as we could step from stone to stone without running any risk of falling into the water and getting drowned.

At the principal hotel of the village resided a huge St. Bernard dog, who evidently considered himself the guardian of the place. We never knew his real name, but we christened him "Shot's enemy," for he invariably attacked our poor old setter as we passed the inn; and though Shot is usually brave enough, and indeed disposed to be pugnacious, he literally shook every time he caught sight of his fierce adversary. One evening, to our amusement, he shrunk off to the river as he neared the enemy's country, and rejoined us through a gap in the wall about a hundred yards further on, no doubt believing "discretion the better part of valour."

Sometimes we used to join some friends, who had taken a house for the season not far off, in excursions for the day amongst the mountains or other pleasant places, and then of course we took with us provision of all sorts, as we generally stayed out until after tea.

But our most enjoyable hours were spent by the river in the cool of the evening, listening to the hum of insects, the song of birds, and the ripple of the water, and watching the golden-backed trout as they leaped to seize the flies which settled in myriads on the surface of the stream. The Flwydd abounds in picturesque glades and foaming cataracts from its very source; but here and there one sees a pool of almost glassy stillness, in which are reflected the overhanging branches of the trees and the bright blue sky above them.

Sunday is always nicer in country than in town; but nowhere can one realize more completely George Herbert's description of the Sabbath than in Wales, where it is indeed "a day most calm, most bright." All nature seems to be sensible of the difference between this and other days. The church at Llysfaen is a tiny old edifice, quite inadequate to the requirements of the village, which is now so much resorted to. But it is the dearest of little churches, and the

service is always impressive, while the refreshing glimpse of the woods beyond through the open doorway added to the soothing and hallowed influences of the service.

At the end of the six weeks of perfectly dry weather a drizzling rain set in one afternoon, so we could not go for our usual walk after tea. The showers, however, made no perceptible difference in the river, and we were therefore startled when just before bedtime an awful sound of rushing water was heard. We ran at once to the bridge, and there a splendid sight awaited us. The rocks on which we had sat only the day before were covered with foaming cascades, and in the caldron below the bridge the waters seethed and whirled until they seemed to lash themselves into ungovernable fury. It turned out there had been a tremendous storm among the mountains, and the little streams, overflowing, united in finding a channel in the Flwydd.

Our landlady expressed an opinion that some celebrated falls in the neighbourhood would be "smart." So we decided to walk there the following day, when we were repaid for the exertion by finding them in a state of grandeur and beauty that defies description.

While enjoying ourselves thus in grateful admiration of the beauties of nature, autumn crept on, bringing with it its pleasant accompaniments of nuttings and blackberrying excursions.

By degrees, however, the days grew chilly and the evenings long, and we began to feel a need for the comforts of home. So we prepared to say adieu to our summer quarters and the kind-hearted villagers.

We took our departure, but so pleasant a recollection of our holiday remains, that we are already planning a renewal of it in the ensuing summer.

M. F.

## IT IS WELL.

"He hath done all things well."—Mark vii. 37.

So they said, who saw the wonders
Of Messiah's power and love;
So they sing, who see His glory
In the Father's house above.
Ever reading, in each record
Of the strangely varied past,
"All was well which God appointed,
All has wrought for good at last."

## NELLIE.

SOLUTION OF THE EIGHTY-NINTH PICTURE STORY.

A SMALL cottage standing back from the road on the outskirts of a large town, its tiny trellised porch covered with fragrant honeysuckle and roses, away from the noise and bustle of the town, though very small, still so bright-looking on the outside,—birds singing blithely among the green leaves of the surrounding elms and beeches. You would say, "Oh, how happy the inmates of that cottage must have been!" But we cannot by any means always imagine truly the interior of a person or place by the exterior, as it is not always a true index to the character or inside. To satisfy ourselves about the inmates of this particular little abode, we will take the liberty of peeping inside, and viewing the inner of the two rooms of which the cottage consists. There is certainly a wee room opening into the one bedroom in which the only child sleeps, but when these have been enumerated we have described all.

In the farthest corner of the room we see a scene that involuntarily draws the tears to our compassionate eyes.

On the bed, which is covered with a neat patch work quilt, lies the form of a man. We look into his face, it is pale and emaciated; the cheeks are sunken and perfectly colourless; the hand which his daughter clasps passionately within her own is lamentably wasted; his body has hardly any flesh upon the bones,—all caused from a long-protracted and painful illness. He feels that he has but a few hours more to live, and has called his only child to him, and is now trying to soothe her; his wife is quietly crying in another part of the room. "My darling," began the sick man, faintly. She lifted her tear-stained face to his. "Don't take on so. 'Tis God's will—you and mother—think it hard—now; but be sure—that He will give you—strength to bear up under the sorrow—which—He thinks best for us." Do not imagine that he spoke without many gasps for breath, and sometimes with long intervals between the words. He called his wife to him. She came and knelt near the bed by the side of her daughter. An hour after, he had quitted this world and gone far beyond the blue sky, away from all strife and trouble for ever; never to know again sorrow or sickness—never again to know what it was to be poor.

We will not dwell on the grief of the sorrowing wife and child. Mrs. Hunte did not, however, give way to that hopeless grief knowing no ray of sunshine; she knew that "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away;" and she tried to do right, and not rebel against God's will.

The long expensive illness of her husband, his funeral, and several other unavoidable expenses, had so reduced Mrs. Hunte's small capital that she now had literally nothing left to satisfy hunger—an enemy which she could not evade without money.

"There, Nellie," she said, opening the cupboard in which the provisions were usually kept, "you see we have nothing more—not a crust—but that one loaf. My darling, it is a terrible wrench to me; but you know my eyes are not strong enough to enable me to do enough needlework, or anything else that would pay, wherewith to support us both." (A pang shot into poor Nellie's heart; she dreaded the sequel to her mother's speech.) "My child, you know the place in the town where they educate young girls to be housemaids and that?" Nellie's eyes filled with tears. "Nell, my dear—don't cry so, it breaks my heart, darling, but do listen to what I think best for us both: I think Mrs. Howard would

pay the sum to get you in with; darling, I think you must go there to learn to be a good and trustworthy servant, it will help me so much;" and she lowered her voice to a whisper; "father would have wished it." That was enough.

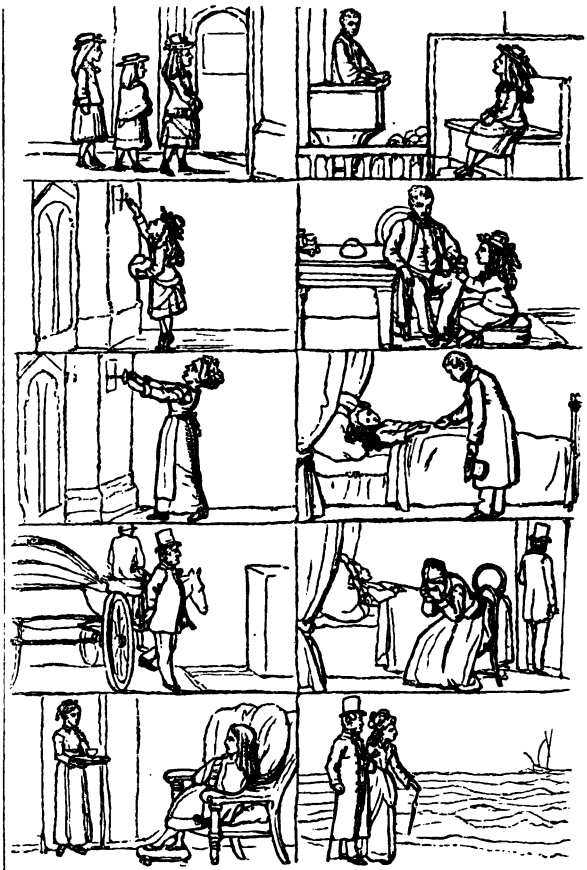
A week after, Nellie and her mother went up the broad steps of the most useful institution in the town, viz., a school to teach young girls all the different rudiments in the education of a good servant. There Nellie learnt to work neatly, to wash clothes, until not a speck of dirt or blemish of any kind remained, though she was so small she had to stand upon a stool in order to work comfortably at the large tub, with her instructress standing opposite. Then when the things were almost dried she was taught to iron them out smoothly, how to fold properly, &c. Besides all this she was initiated into the not very obscure mysteries of laying a fire properly.

It was not so very long after she came to the school that she went for an interview with a lady who wanted an under kitchenmaid, and who having twice before taken young girls from this famous Institute, and both having turned out well, wished to try again; and so, as she did not mind a girl who was rather younger than she usually took, as she could be so strongly recommended, she settled a day and hour on and at which she saw Nellie (now called Ellen). The interview being satisfactory, Nellie was soon installed in her first place. She went about her work in the best fashion possible, taking a pride in keeping her pots and pans shiny, helping the cook to weigh the meat after she had taken it in from the butcher's man; in doing her duties well and thoroughly in the state of life in which she was placed.

How happy was the meeting between the mother and daughter, when after a year of parting they met again! They had not seen each other for the whole of that period, and though Nellie's stay was necessarily of short duration, she made the most of it, returning afterwards to her place the better for her change, and more freshened up for work again. I need only add that this was her first and last situation, for she gradually rose in the family until she became housekeeper, living to a good old age in peace and quietness, respected and beloved by all.

CONSTANCE F. B. (15.)

*Horndean, Hants.*



## PICTURE STORY.

### No. XCI.

HONOURABLE MENTION.—Clara R., Mary E. E., Annie E. W., Alice M. J., Maud T. W., Fanny H. S., Marie A. M., Wilhelmina C., Marv G. C., Mary A. H., Katherine L. S., Anemone, Irene B., Margaret H. P., Martha L., Maryann S. E., Emily W., Emily E. T., Annie F. B., Harriet A. C., Edith A. S., Martha B., Florence C. C., Edith J. E., Alice B. B., Minnie R., Mary R. R., Lilla M. T., Mary P., Mary M., Catherine W. H. J., Emma B., Florence J. C., Emily A. M. J., Margaret E. W., Florence M. C., Clara C. A., Amy M. B., Annie A. H., Georgina J. P., Gertrude S. B., Edith S., Ada G., Mary R. M., Laura H., Emmy N., Charlotte A., Kate B., Rose A. H., Kate E. D., Lilian A. D., Maud P., Lucille L., Pollie A. S., Elizabeth J. G., Anna P.; Willie M., George K., Robert C., Samuel S. S.

Solutions of the ninety-first story should be posted not later than the 8th of this month. The full name, address, and age must be appended. No replies can be inserted in *Sunshine*, nor can anonymous communications be noticed. Thanks for flowers and photographs. Letters for the Editor should be addressed, The Rev. Dr. Whittemore, 12, Paternoster Row, London.

EDITOR.

[BASIL LISTENING TO MISS GREY.]

## AUNT MILLICENT'S CHARGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SOLDIER HAROLD," &c.

### CHAPTER XIV.—UNCONSCIOUS INFLUENCE.

FIVE o'clock had struck, and afternoon school was over, and Arnold had seen all his companions rush off, helter-skelter, while he had to remain behind in the empty schoolroom, to learn the task that had been set him. He looked very disconsolate as he sat at his desk with his book before him; for the merry shouts of the boarders in the play-ground told that fun was going on. The day boys had gone home, and of course Johnnie and the two Gascoigne boys amongst them, and he was left behind. But he dare not move from his seat, for he knew that Dr. Waybridge was in the class-room, and his ears would be sure to detect any movement.

Arnold was bitterly sorry that he had been so foolish as to do what he had done. He always was sorry when he had given way to unlawful fun or mischief; but, unfortunately, his sorrow did not prevent him doing the like again when opportunity occurred. And then there was that other sin, which was always present to his mind, and which came to his memory with added force and bitterness now, when he was being punished for another fault.

He hid his face in his two hands upon his desk, and wished he were a better boy.

By and by he was aroused by a gentle, very gentle scratching on the window-pane; and looking up, he saw Basil's face outside. Basil, as soon as he found he had attracted attention, gently opened the window and sat upon the sill, with his head in the room and his legs outside. For it was a rule in the school that, whenever a boy was kept in after lesson hours, none of his companions

might enter the schoolroom. So Basil sat at his ease, for he was not breaking the letter of the law, whatever he might the spirit.

Arnold gave a great sigh of relief when he saw him.

"Oh, Basil, where have you come from? I thought you would be halfway home by this."

"I have waited for you; so make haste, old fellow."

"That was very good of you. I will. But Virgil isn't the easiest thing in the world to learn."

Basil sat quiet while Arnold gave his mind to his lesson, and in something less than half an hour he jumped up with the exclamation, "There, I can repeat old Virgil now!"

And he went and knocked at the door of the classroom where Dr. Waybridge was waiting for him.

The ten lines were repeated without a mistake, and when Dr. Waybridge returned him the book, Arnold was hastening away, but the master stopped him.

"Stay a moment, Grey. Why is it that you are always up to some mischief or other?"

Arnold coloured and looked down, but did not answer.

"You, with your early training and your good father, ought to be an example to others for good, and not for evil; and yet when there is any breaking of rules in the school, I am sure to find that Grey is at the bottom of it. How is it, my boy?"

Arnold muttered that he did not know.

"Then I think I can tell you. Your chief aim is to stand well with your companions, not to do right; and you have not moral courage sufficient to bear even a small amount of ridicule; and so you go in for anything that comes uppermost, right or wrong, and are sorry for it afterwards."

"Yes, sir, I am sorry—often," said Arnold, earnestly looking up.

"Ah, well, don't you think that it would be better to be sorry before rather than after? Look here, my boy. This is your first term with me, and it is very important how you spend it. There is not only yourself to consider, but your little brother, whom you influence more than you think. Make up your mind what you ought to do, and what not, and stick to it. By the way, what had Mr. Jackson done to you that you should play him such a trick as that?"

"Nothing, sir," answered Arnold, a little startled, and uneasy at the sudden turn Dr. Waybridge had given to the conversation.

"And didn't you know, or didn't you think, what a loss those spectacles would be to him? he cannot see a quarter of a yard without them. And yet, what do you think, Arnold Grey? he has been to me to beg me to excuse your paying for them; he says now, in his calmer moments, that he really believes it was purely accidental, though he was so angry at the time. Which was it, Grey, accident or malice prepense?"

*For a moment* Arnold was sorely tempted to say it was accident. He had spent all his month's allowance, and had no money; and that would be a good way of getting out of paying for them.

Dr. Waybridge's eye was fixed keenly upon him as he saw his hesitation; but better thoughts prevailed, and he said,—

"I did it intentionally, sir."

"Yes, Grey, I know you did. I saw all that passed, therefore you must pay for the damage done, to make you remember it; but I hope this will be the last time you will have such a thing to do. Now you may go."

The walk home was a silent one for a great part of the way. Arnold was making many good resolutions to himself, that if he got out of this scrape it should be a long time before he would be in another. But he was not out of it yet; he had no money, and how he was to pay for the spectacles he could not tell, without applying to his father, which he was very reluctant to do. He could, no doubt, borrow it of the Gascoigne boys, but Mr. Grey was so very particular about his children never being in debt, even to one another, that he could not do that.

Basil walked quietly along by his side, slashing off the long stalks of grass with a stick he had cut from the hedge, and now and then casting a glance at the preoccupied face of his companion.

At last he spoke, for to talk to Arnold had been his motive for staying behind the rest.

"Arnold, there is something more bothering you than this simple affair of to-day. I have seen it a good bit; you are not as you used to be. If there is anything a fellow can help you in I'm at your service.

Arnold started. Had all his efforts of appearing unconscious been in vain, after all? He laughed a rather constrained laugh.

"What fancies will you get next, I wonder, old fellow? The nut I am trying to crack at present—and a very hard one it is—is how I am to pay for old Jackson's artificial eye mending."

"How much is it?"

"Three and six, I expect; Mr. Jackson said they would cost that."

"I am good for two, and I make sure Ernest will have the other one and six; so that's soon settled."

"No, I can't take it—I must not, Basil; thank you all the same, but I have got into the mess, and I must get out of it."

"No one need know, and we'll trust you as long as you like for paying it back, if you think about that."

"No; I promised papa ever so long ago never to get into debt, even for a trifle, and I won't. Besides, it would not be right to deceive in that sort of way."

Arnold expected Basil would burst into ridicule at him for saying that, and it had cost him a good deal to say it. But Basil did nothing of the sort; he was silent for a minute, and then he said,—

"I think if I were you I should tell Aunt Millicent all about it."

"Aunt Millicent!" and Arnold stopped in sheer astonishment. "Would you tell your mother?"

"My mother? no, certainly not," answered Basil, and there was something of pain in the tone of his voice. "Mamma is, unfortunately, troubled with nerves, and she would not care to be bothered with my little matter; but," and he laid his hand with a firm pressure on Arnold's shoulder, "if I had an aunt Millicent I think I should tell her everything."

Arnold said nothing, but he was a good deal struck by Basil's earnest manner of speaking; he had always had, or pretended to have, such a low opinion of women and girls. Presently Basil went on,—

"I think I will tell you what I saw and heard last night. It was getting dusk, and I ran down to the vicarage; I wanted to see you about something, very important no doubt at the time, but I forget what it was now. Well, I went up to the drawing-room window, intending to call you out but you were not there. Only Miss Grey was sitting close to the open window, little Eva was in her lap, and Hughie was kneeling close beside her, with her arm round him, and looking up into her face. They were all too much occupied to notice me, for they were listening to what Miss Grey was saying. And I stayed and listened too. I cannot tell you what she said. I think she was talking to the little ones on what she had been reading to them. But I know this, that it seemed to me as if Miss Grey felt that God was there; her eyes were raised upwards, and such a look on her face! almost as if she could see Him; and Hughie's face was a reflection of hers, so full of love and trust. I declare it made me wish to be a wee thing like him again, that I might have his faith. But one thing I did hear, that our Father in heaven, as Miss Grey says, sees and knows all we do. How can you and I like to think that, Arnold?"

"Oh, Basil, don't!" said Arnold, "you frighten me."

"Ay, it frightened me. You don't want your father to know when you have done wrong, but God knows without being told. I have been thinking of it ever since. But Miss Grey seemed glad to know it. It was a pleasure to her; it did not frighten her, Arnold."

Arnold had heard it often and often before; but somehow the fact that God knew everything that he did had never come home till now, when it was repeated so earnestly by his thoughtless companion.

That lie which he had spoken: God heard it, and God was angry. He wished heartily that Basil had not reminded him of it.

When Arnold reached home he walked straight into the drawing-room where Millicent was working, and Agatha was reading aloud to her.

"Stop, Agatha. I want to talk to auntie."

"You must wait a little," answered his sister, not well pleased at the interruption; "we are in the middle of such an interesting part."

"Never mind it, aunt Millicent. Do come into the garden; I want to tell you something very badly."

"I think you must try to be patient for a little, Arnold. It is hardly fair to Agatha to break in upon her reading in this manner. I will come to you in a quarter of an hour."

"There!" exclaimed Agatha in triumph, "don't you know it is very rude to interrupt people in that way?"

Arnold uttered some angry exclamation, and went away, shutting the door violently after him.

"Boys are very untameable animals, are they not, auntie?" said Agatha, with a smile.

"An unselfish sister would have given up her own pleasure, Agatha. But go on with your reading now."

But when the quarter of an hour was over, the book was taken out of her hand.

"We must stop now, Agatha," said her aunt's quiet but determined voice.

"Oh, auntie, just another page, only one; and then I shall be satisfied."

"Not another word, Agatha. I told Arnold I would go to him, and I must."

But Arnold was not in the garden. Millicent found him at last, stretched full length on the sofa in the dining-room, his head buried in his hands among the cushions.

The gentle touch of his aunt's hand roused him.

"Oh, auntie, here you are at last!"

"You are very late home this afternoon, Arnold. Papa wondered very much that you were not here for tea, and Johnnie either could not or would not say anything about it. I told him I thought you had gone home with Basil and Ernest; was I right?"

"No, auntie."

Arnold got up, and putting his arms round his aunt's neck, laid his head on her shoulder.

"Auntie, I want three and sixpence very badly, can you let me have it?"

"Certainly not, without knowing what you want it for. That would not be right, Arnold."

"I could have borrowed it of some of the fellows, but I know papa hates us to do anything of that sort, so I did not. Can't you give it me out of your housekeeping purse, aunt Millicent?"

"Possibly; but you have not told me yet to what use the money is to be put."

"I broke Mr. Jackson's spectacles this afternoon, and Dr. Waybridge says I must pay for them mending; and I don't want papa to know about it, and that's a fact, aunt Millicent."

"But, dear, I am sure papa ought to know. I could easily give you it, but that would be encouraging you in extravagant habits, besides helping to deceive your dear good father, and I

cannot do that. Tell him all about it, my boy; I am sure he will not be angry for an accident."

Was Arnold going to let Millicent go away with the idea that it was an accident? for he said nothing. Alas! how one sin warps the mind and blinds the understanding!

Arnold argued with himself that he had never said it was an accident; if aunt Millicent chose to take it so, it was no business of his. Had he so soon again forgotten the God who sees and knows everything?

"I shall not tell papa, aunt Millicent, I don't want to vex him; and if you don't give me the money, Basil will, for he offered me it this afternoon."

Millicent stood for a minute thinking, and then she left the room without speaking. Her rap at the study door was answered by an absent "Come in."

Mr. Grey was sitting at the table busily absorbed in his writing.

"What is it, Millicent?" he asked, half raising his head as she entered.

"Bertram, Arnold has overstepped his month's allowance; at least, he has no money to pay for an accident that Dr. Waybridge says he is to pay for; it is three and sixpence. Am I to give it to him?"

"Yes, you may give it him this time; but tell him he must make his allowance last him. I cannot stand extravagance or debt."

"With a light heart Millicent went back to the dining-room with the money in her hand.

"There, dear. Papa says you may have it this once; but you must be more careful in future, Arnold."

And with a light kiss on his forehead she left him without giving him time to thank her.

Then Arnold woke up to remorse and shame for what he had done; he had played upon his aunt's kind feelings, when he knew that if she had known the truth she would have acted differently. He had allowed her to believe a lie if he had not deliberately uttered it as before.

Alas! what had become of all his good resolutions? Gone! scattered to the winds; because they were made in his own strength. He had swerved from the simple straight line of truth and rectitude, and it seemed as if he could not go back again.

## Chapter XV.—Aunt Millicent finds it out.

Arnold was very miserable. He could no longer enjoy his play with his companions. Lessons were performed somehow; but as soon as he returned home he shut himself up in his own room, and would admit nobody. And, above all, he could not bear the sight of Martha—Martha, who was still under the weight of unjust suspicion.

*And this lasted two* or three days, until Millicent *grew quite uneasy* about, him, fearing he was ill; but to all questions of the sort he answered that he was quite well.

And it was illness of the mind, not of the body. The one thought always uppermost was, that God knew of his sin, and God was angry. Do what he would he could not get rid of it, and he could not pray with that unconfessed lie upon his conscience.

At length Millicent was determined to find out what ailed him; so she sent Agatha and Johnnie out for a walk one evening, and then she went up to Arnold's room.

But on the stairs she met Martha.

"Please, ma'am, I think I know what is the matter with Master Arnold, if you would not mind my telling you."

"No, Martha, I want to find out very much."

"Then, ma'am, I think it must be about that pencil of Miss Agatha's. I think, perhaps, he put it into my box; for Master Hugh told me they knocked it down once, and that Master Arnold picked up the things; so perhaps he put that in too. I don't know, of course, Miss Grey. I wish I did!"

"And why have you never said anything about it all this time, Martha?"

"Because I wasn't sure, ma'am. And oh, I should have been sorry for him to be suspected as I have been. But if he has done it he won't be happy again until he has confessed it, don't you see, Miss Grey? and I can't bear to see him miserable like this. So I thought I would mention it: I hope I have not done wrong."

"I wish you had told me long ago, my poor Martha. If indeed it be so, what have you not suffered for another's wrong-doing!"

"Ah, but, ma'am, it would have been very different if I had done it and had not told: so I can feel for Master Arnold."

Millicent was glad she knew what Martha had to tell, for it made her better able to talk to Arnold.

The gentle tap at his door was unheeded, so she entered unbidden. Arnold was lying on his face on the bed, his whole frame shaking with convulsive sobbing.

"Arnold!" said the soft voice of his aunt at his side, as she laid a hand on his shoulder. The boy started, and drew himself away from her, but beyond that he took no notice.

"Arnold, what is the matter? will you not tell me?"

"It would do no good," came in muffled tones from the bed.

"You must let me be the judge of that; or if you will not tell me, I must ask papa to come to you."

Arnold sprang up, and revealed such a woe-begone face that Millicent's heart was touched.

"Oh, aunt Millicent," the boy exclaimed, "for pity's sake don't tell papa! He must not know! he shall not know! oh dear, what am I to do?" and he pressed his hands to his burning forehead.

Millicent said nothing further just then. She

dipped the towel in water and laid it cold and wet upon Arnold's aching temples. The effect was most grateful to the poor boy. When he was a little calmer, and less excited, she said to him,—

"Now, Arnold, get up, and come and sit here by me, and let me know what this trouble is."

Arnold dragged himself off the bed, and went and sat down on the floor at his aunt's side, and leaned his head against her lap; but he did not tell her.

She waited a minute to see if he would speak; and then she took the flushed face between her two hands and kissed it.

"Shall I tell you what it is, Arnold? is it not something about the pencil-case that Agatha lost awhile ago, and for which poor Martha has suffered so much?"

"Oh, auntie, then you know! oh, I am so glad!" and Arnold breathed a sigh of relief. "Have you known all the time?"

"No, certainly not. And I really *know* nothing now: I can only guess. But just now as I came up to your room Martha met me, and told me she had fancied all along that it must be you who had put the pencil into her box; but she had not liked to say anything, lest she should be accusing you unjustly. And yet, Arnold, you have allowed her to bear the blame all this time, knowing perfectly well that she was innocent. Is it so?"

"Yes, aunt Millicent."

The words were spoken hardly above a whisper, but Arnold had owned to his fault at last.

"But you told me plainly and distinctly—both me and Agatha, if I remember rightly—that you had never even seen the pencil-case; that must have been untrue, Arnold?"

There was no answer this time; but Arnold's head went lower and lower until it almost touched the ground; and there was no need for spoken words to tell Millicent that his sin had found him out.

There was a quiver of pent up feeling in her voice when she spoke again.

"It is no wonder that you have been so unhappy and out of spirits of late, with all this upon your heart and conscience, my poor boy; how I pity you! Martha, with all she has gone through, cannot have had half the suffering that you have brought upon yourself. Now tell me quietly and calmly how it all came about, and your reason for what you did."

Arnold waited a minute or two, and then he began and told his aunt how he had first found the pencil-case and kept it back just to tease Agatha; and then, having first told a lie about it, the thought came into his mind to lay the blame on poor Martha; and after that, when Millicent asked him again, he could not bring himself to confess what he had done; and so he went on, making himself and others miserable.

"Then, it seems that just for a piece of wanton mischief, you have taken all the pleasure and happiness out of that poor girl's life, and stood by cool and unfeeling to see her the subject of cruel injustice! Arnold, I could not have believed you capable of such a thing!"

There was a ring of indignation in aunt Millicent's voice, such as her young nephews and nieces did not often hear. She had felt so much for Martha in her disgrace and trouble, that she could have been very angry; and yet she was glad that the mystery was cleared up at last.

"I am afraid your papa will be very grieved when he comes to know," she said.

"Oh, aunt Millicent!" exclaimed Arnold, clasping his two hands together, and looking up pitifully into her face, "must he really know? I have told you, is not that enough?"

"What do you think yourself, Arnold? would you like everybody still to go on fancying that Martha was dishonest? I think you have done enough harm to that poor girl's character without it going on any longer."

"But papa," murmured Arnold, the tears gathering in his eyes again. "He will be so angry and so grieved because I told a lie, aunt Millicent," and Arnold's head dropped into his hands again.

"Ah, yes, that he will. And there is One—your heavenly Father and Friend—who is always grieved when His children do wrong; yet you never feared to offend Him. Seek for His pardon, dear Arnold: then I am sure you will be happier than you have been for some time past."

She pressed a kiss, earnest, fervent, and affectionate, upon the bowed head, and then she left him.

Straight down into the study went Millicent.

"Bertram, can you give me a few minutes, or are you too busy?"

Mr. Grey had just come in, hot and tired. He had had a rather unpleasant discussion of some length with one of his parishioners, and it had left him weary and out of sorts, and a little fretful, likewise, it must be owned: so that he was not in the best possible humour for receiving Millicent's communication.

"I am not busy," he answered, looking up; "but I am bothered. That fellow, Lewis, will *not* listen to reason yet! But what is it you want, Millicent?"

Millicent hesitated.

It was not a favourable opportunity; and yet he must be told.

"I have found out all about the pencil-case," she said at last.

"What pencil-case? oh, you mean the one Agatha made such a stir about. Well, I suppose there was not much to find out. There was very little doubt in my mind but that Martha took it. Has she confessed at last?"

"No Bertram. I have noticed that Arnold has been very unlike himself of late; and to-day, just now, I have discovered what ails him."

"Really, Millicent," exclaimed Mr. Grey, somewhat impatiently, "I wish you could manage

the children without coming to me so often with their little faults and troubles! it worries me. It used not to be so in their mother's time," he added in a low tone.

A look of intense pain came over the gentle face beside him. Had all her efforts for the good of those children been in vain then? that not even their father appreciated them. But she checked the answer that rose to her lips, and went on as if the words had not been spoken.

She told him just what she had been hearing from Arnold. He heard her to the end with what patience he could.

"But I thought Arnold knew nothing at all of the affair. I am sure you told me so, Millicent."

"Yes, dear, so he said."

"Nay, then. there must be some mistake somewhere, Arnold could not tell a deliberate falsehood. You know how I have always impressed truth upon the children, and they have never failed hitherto; and I am sure Arnold would not now. There must be some mistake."

"No, dear. Arnold himself confesses it."

Mr. Grey covered his face with his hands; and I think, if Arnold could have known what his father felt at that moment, he would have repented of his sin most bitterly.

By and by he looked up again, and Millicent was grieved to see the change that had come over him; even his very voice seemed altered.

"This is a terrible blow, Millicent. I could never have thought it of Arnold. I always reckoned so confidently on my children's truth. Well, I must talk to him, but not just yet. I am afraid I should be too harsh at present. I must think it over. Send the boy to me here in half-an-hour."

Millicent gave some slight answer, and turned to leave the room. She had almost reached the door, when her brother called her back. He put his arm round her and drew her towards him.

"I am afraid I spoke very unkindly to you just now. God bless you, dear, for all your loving care of my poor motherless little ones. But for you I don't know where they would have been."

"Oh, Bertram!" exclaimed Millicent, with a sudden burst of tears. "I would give a very great deal to have prevented all this! I am so sorry for Arnold and for you."

## A FLOWER SERMON HYMN.

(*Written for the Flower Service*, 1876.)

TUNE—*St. Albans, or Haydn.*

FLOWERS, bright flowers, are springing
From the dewy ground,
Sweetest odours flinging
Everywhere around;
Little sermons preaching—
*Though* no words may fall—
*Of God's goodness*, reaching
*To the lives of all.*

Flowers, bright flowers, are springing
From the dewy ground;
Sweetest odours flinging
Everywhere around.

Not for rich men only
Do the roses bloom,—
To the poor and lonely
Joy they bring 'midst gloom;
So the gifts God sendeth
Prince and peasant share,
And His love extendeth
To us everywhere.
Flowers, bright flowers, &c.

Tenderly He guides us
Through the ills that rise;
Daily food provides us,
Daily strength supplies:
But each floral treasure
Tells us His delight
Is *to give us pleasure*,
And our path make bright.
Flowers, bright flowers, &c.

Growing in the hedges,
Or in gardens fair,
Flowers are sweetest pledges
Of His loving care:
Faithless doubts should never
Fill these hearts of ours,
While around us ever
God is planting flowers!
Flowers, bright flowers, &c.

NETTA LEIGH.

## HOW WE FURNISHED OUR DOLL'S HOUSE.

### CHAPTER IV.—WE USE OUR SCISSORS.

I'M very fond of cutting out things with scissors, so is Gerty, but nurse doesn't like us to have them. First of all she says we shall poke our eyes out with them, which we never do; then she says we shall cut our fingers off, and we don't do that either; and at last she says that we cut up everything that we ought not to. Perhaps we do sometimes cut things that it would be quite as well for us to leave alone, but that is always because we have nothing else to do. Yesterday, now, nurse would not give us any paper to cut, and so I wanted to do something with my scissors, and I thought my big wax doll, "Maud," hadn't got her hair quite in the fashion, and would look better in short curls like Gerty's, instead of long ringlets, and so when nurse was busy reading a paper book with pictures in, that she wouldn't let me look at, I just cut "Maud's" hair short. She didn't look half as pretty as I thought she would after it, because, you see, she never laughs, as Gerty does, and her face won't go into dimples, and her eyes won't dance like Gerty's when she's merry. So I felt very much disappointed, and it was very silly of me, of course, but when I found I couldn't fix the long hair on again, I began to cry, because I felt sure I had spoilt "Maud" for ever.

rse looked up from her reading and began to me, which only made me angry as well as d. But that wasn't the worst of it, for while been so busy we had none of us looked after , and now, after scolding me, when nurse l to look at her, she found that she had been g out all the holes in her worked white dress urse had put on for her to go down and see ıny in, so that it was all in rags, and not fit seen.

course nurse had to take it off and put her other, and she was so angry and in such a n, that if papa had not said he would never us to be whipped by any one, I do believe ould have slapped her. But when auntie of it next day, instead of scolding us as wanted her to do, and taking our scissors she said it was all nurse's fault, for if she ven us some of the paper that auntie left for aud's hair would still have been on her and Gerty's frock would not have been

ın't think nurse liked it, but no doubt she ıt auntie was right when she said we must ome work to do, or we should be sure to get ischief; and whenever we have wanted paper since that time she has always given it

l now I must tell you just what kind of we do cut, and how they can be used for ıll's house.

begin with, auntie says we must learn to use issors before we can cut anything out pro- and therefore we couldn't furnish our doll's without being able to cut: but that isn't all, all want antimacassars, and table-covers, urtains for our doll's house, and auntie says ıll be able to cut them all out in fine paper, ovely patterns on them, after a time.

## THE FLOWER SERMON.

ollowing, by a young friend, is so correct a report of ır's Flower Sermon, that we have much pleasure in g it, so that our dear friends who could not be pre- y know something about it.—ED.]

*shall cast off his flower as the olive.*"—JOB xv. 33.

NCE more we meet with flowers to greet
Our blest Redeemer Lord;
nce more to hear the lessons dear
That God's own flowers afford.

nto the young—the young in heart,
I would these words address;
nd may the Lord with gracious fruit
My words this evening bless.

he young in heart—for outward age
Enfeebled, oft appears
ı inward soul as fair and fresh
As they, the young in years.

ike as the fragrant lilac shrub,
The ash and manna tree;
hough outwardly so far apart,
Yet olives prove to be;

So rich and poor, and young and old,
The free and bondman's son,
Who bow before the Saviour's throne,
In Christ are all as one.

Yea, one in Christ, in Christian life,
One baptism, faith, and Lord;
They join in one terrestrial race,
And look for one reward.

They who upon the Lord believe,
And trust Him for His grace,
Though slightly varying in rite,
The same bright lineage trace,

Despise not then thy brethren poor,
Or those who disagree
In outward forms that little hurt,
They have one faith with Thee.

How! if the olives growing still,
On those hills far away,
Were thus in high, disdaining words
Of lilac, ash, to say:—

"We are the true, old olive trees,
Whose fathers flourished here,
When hallowed were these sacred groves
By holy footsteps near.

"Yet 'mong our leaves are whispering
The echoes of that Voice,
Whose blessed truths and gracious words
Did bid the world rejoice.

"We are the only olive trees—
The trees that long have stood;
The ash, the privet in their place,
May each be fair and good:

"But let them not our kindred claim:
They come not of our race;
And 'mong the goodly olive-clan
Hold neither rank nor place."

Now let us seek our text again,
And learn therefrom how we
Are likened to the olive flowers,
Are like the olive tree.

Pass you beneath those olive groves
When they put forth the flowers;
The ground is white with fallen bloom,
With light and snowy showers.

How oft we see a lovely child
Of genius bright and rare,
With every hour disclosing still
New buds of promise fair!

And when the blossoms open wide
Seem set for fruitage great,
And we with a rejoicing pride
Th' abundant harvest wait,

The grave has opened, scattering all
Those blossoms on the earth;
Those buds and flowrets never yield
The promise of their birth.

Again,—disease's hand is laid
On maidhood's fairest years;
How beautiful beneath his touch
The fragile form appears!

We see her at the early dawn
Of womanhood now grown,
Her flowers of graces manifold,
Expanded and full blown.

And lo! the breath of death hath strewn
Those blossoms to the wind,
The olive has cast off its flowers
And left no fruit behind.

And why? Not all the olive bloom
Can grow to fruit mature.
Yet not in vain those fallen flowers;
Some use they may secure.

They draw the sap, and catch the beam,
To make a fruitful tree:
So human buds their work may do,
Although no fruit they see.

But now, behold this youth awhile,
Who full of strength and life
Goes forth, with every prospect bright,
To wrest in living strife.

He yieldeth in temptation's hour;
Seeks not a hand to save:—
And where are all those goodly flowers
Which such fair promise gave?

Disease came not to mar his days;
He slept not in the tomb;
Yet as the olive casts its flower
So he casts off his bloom.

Yet comfort take, the olive tree
In each alternate year,
No blossom and no fruit at all
Till one year's rest will bear.

Pray then, that as the ensuing spring
New buds the olive bowers,
So God's returning grace may win
This fallen youth fresh flowers.

Grafted nto the Olive true,
That Olive, Christ the Lord,
May you and he abundantly
Both flower and fruit afford.

Now, thirdl, from this tree I seek
New lessons all to suit.
What use may be the olive plum?
Why hope we for the fruit?

But poor would fare in Palestine
The farmer at his toil,
Were not His bread made sweet and good
By olive fruit and oil.

And as in God's own Holy Word
Unto the olive tree,
The children oft are likened,
So like the olive be.

Oh be ye like the olive fruit,
And into some dull life
A relish be unto the bread
Of weary toil and strife.

With little deeds of kindness now,
And little words of peace,
Brighten the sad, cold lives around,
Let lonely sorrow cease.

Lament not, like the manna tree,
Thou canst not be all sweet,
All comfort and and all sympathy
To every one you meet.

But be content where'er thy God
Has given to thee thy place;
*And that* thou may'st fulfil it well
*Pray always for His* grace.

Be but the little olive plum,
Say to the mourning heart:—
"Let me unto thy daily bread
A savour sweet impart."

And like the dove of old did bring
To Noah the olive leaf,
So bear thou to the needy one,
Some solacefor his grief.

Again. When ripe, the olive plum
Is placed within the mill;
And 'neath the slightest pressure laid,
The finest oils distil.

And like the clearest olive oil
Beneath the oilpress trod;
So is the love of the young heart
That floweth forth to God.

Gently within the tender breast
The Holy Spirit moves;
And fully acceptable to God
That oil of sweetness proves.

Oh, hear His voice, and open now
In all its fresh, young love,
Your youthful hearts unto the Lord;
Lift up your thoughts above.

Wait not until by mercy moved,
With troubles round thee strewn,
The Lord doth seek to crush thine heart
'Neath tribulation's stone.

That finding nought but briars and thorns,
Thou mayst at last return
To Him, who in thy pleasant hours
Thou didst unheeding spurn.

For like the oil that flows beneath
The crushing, bruising weight;
Not half so sweet, not half so clear,
That heart that turneth late.

Its bloom is lost, its freshness gone,
Crushed down by trial and toil;
Oh, open now your hearts to God,
Give forth your finest oil!

OTTILIE J.

*Greenhithe, Kent.*

## REMOVAL OF OUR PUBLISHING OFFICE.

We have removed our office for the publication of SUNSHINE and GOLDEN HOURS, to 12, Paternoster Row, under the management of MR. WILLIAM POOLE, to whom all business communications should, for the future, be addressed.

Letters for the Editor should be addressed, the Rev. Dr. Whittemore, 12 Paternoster Row, London. Will our dear friends be careful to notice the change of address?

## THE QUARTERLY CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

Will be held at St. Katherine Cree Church, Leadenhall-street, on Sunday afternoon, July 2nd, at half-past three o'clock. We shall be very glad to speak to any of our SUNSHINE friends who attend this Service, if they will remain afterwards.

# SUNSHINE.

EDITED BY W. M. WHITTEMORE, D.D., RECTOR OF ST. KATHERINE CREE, LONDON.

No. 176. AUGUST, 1876. [ONE PENNY.

[ALINE SEIZING HER OPPORTUNITY.]

## LITTLE ALINE.

### A STORY OF GIPSY LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PET'S DIFFICULTIES."

### CHAPTER XXII.—WRATHFUL LOOKS.

FAITH was rather frightened by the indignant words of the gipsy woman; and as soon as she was out of sight, Faith said in a low tone to Ethel, "How angry she was! What made her so?"

"She did not like your finding fault with her fortune-telling; most of the gipsies do that, and they get a great deal of money by it."

"But it is not right of them; why does anybody let them?" said Faith.

"Oh, people like to be told that they will be very rich, or very handsome, or have a rich husband, or get through all their troubles and be very happy afterwards."

"What is the good if it is not true?"

"It is only done for fun, I expect, though sometimes their words do come true, Faith. Aline's

aunt told Mrs. Walker, at the Grange, that she would soon have unexpected news and beautiful presents from a foreign country."

"And did she?"

"Yes, a nephew who was an officer living in India, that she had not heard of for years, was obliged to return home through illness, and he went to her house as soon as he landed; and she had such handsome shawls, and lovely ornaments, that he had brought back with him."

"And he had not written to her?"

"No, he set off in a great hurry, and had not time to write to her."

"Then how could Aline's aunt know anything about it?"

"It seems very mysterious, doesn't it? But it so happened that Mrs. Walker's housemaid had a cousin who was a sailor on the vessel that Captain Walker came over in; and they found out from this cousin that Aline's aunt's brother was in the same ship, and that he had told his sister all about Captain Walker."

"So that was how she knew!" said Faith. "It is very easy to tell fortunes in that way."

"Yes; but if it had not been for the servant's cousin everybody would have thought that Aline's aunt had really the gift of telling beforehand what was going to happen."

"I hope Aline's aunt is not like that woman; I do not like her face at all, it has such a bad expression."

"I have not seen Aline's aunt. Aline herself is a bright, dear little thing; but this gipsy woman belongs to a different tribe. Aline's party is not here at present, but I dare say they soon will be now the hop-picking is over."

Faith and Ethel met the gipsy woman once more, and she was not a bit pleasanter than at first; but as Margaret was with them she did not speak to them, but contented herself with giving each of the girls a wrathful glance as she passed.

Faith instinctively drew closer to her aunt; but Ethel returned her glance with a fearless one, and turned round to look after her as she strode away. The gipsy was also looking back, and she shook her head at Ethel in a threatening manner, and muttered something which could not be heard at that distance.

Margaret was talking to Faith, and did not notice them.

"She is a horrid woman," said Ethel, "I should not care to meet her after dark."

"You are not likely to do that," answered Margaret, smiling; "but she certainly has a disagreeable countenance. And I am afraid these gipsies are rather a dishonest set, for Farmer Thwaites has lost several of his best fowls lately."

"And have these gipsies stolen them?" asked Faith.

"He believes so, for one or two of the men have been prowling about the place of a night, but they have not been caught in the act, so the *theft cannot be proved* against them."

Before long the gipsies packed up their tents and went off on their journey, followed, if not by the good wishes of Farmer Thwaites, at least by his grateful thanks for their departure. And when he said that he never wanted to set eyes on them again, he only expressed the opinion of all the farmers and many of the villagers.

They had left only a few days when smoke was again seen curling out of gipsy tents, and from the queer little chimneys of the travelling vans. This time it was the tribe to which Aline belonged that had taken up its quarters in the neighbourhood, and as her people were generally honest and well-behaved, no dislike was manifested at their re-appearance.

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## Chapter XXIII.—A Visit from Aline.

It was late in the autumn now, and there were more berries and green leaves than flowers to be gathered in the banks and hedges. Still Aline managed one morning to get together a very respectable nosegay, and she walked up with it to Hill-side Farm. Her knock at the door was answered by Patty, her hands just out of the washing tub, and herself not pleased at this interruption to her labours.

"Is Miss Ethel still here?" asked Aline; "a bonnie young lady I mean, with hair like gold, and eyes as blue as the sky," she added, as Patty slightly hesitated in her reply.

"Yes, she is here," answered Patty, reluctantly. "What do you want with her?"

"I want to give her these flowers, and to talk to her for a spell; I've a lot to tell her, for I have not seen her for ages."

"And you cannot see her; she is very busy," said Patty, not admiring Aline's familiar tone; "but I will give her the flowers if you like, and say you brought them."

"No, I must speak to her my own self; I never sends messages to folks, it ain't at all satisfactory. Tell her, please, that Aline's come."

"I shall do no such thing. Miss Raymond is busy, I tell you."

"Where is your mistress?"

"Minding her own business, and I should advise you to do the same. Now give me the flowers, or else be off with you."

"I shan't do either; I'm not agoing to stir till I sees the young lady."

The gipsy child had got her foot inside the door, and as she was strong in the muscles as well as in her will, there might have been a violent struggle between her and Patty, had not a current of wind flung open the back door, which exactly faced the front one, and disclosed Ethel and Faith in the garden, the latter braiding a bag and the former reading aloud. The sudden breeze blew off Patty's cap, and while she stooped to pick it up Aline saw her advantage, and seized upon it. She sprang forward as lightly as a young fawn, and was

across the hall and out at the garden door before Patty was able to stop her.

"Pick up your wits as well as your cap," Aline called out, saucily; and then she walked demurely towards Ethel and Faith, both of whom naturally supposed that Patty had sent her.

"So you have come back to us! Oh, Aline, I am glad to see you again!"

"And I am glad to see you again, miss; you look prettier than ever, and your hair is just like the sun when it's a-shining."

Ethel laughed, and said, "I don't want any of your flattery, Aline, you may keep that for somebody else. Are these nice flowers for me?"

"I picked them for you; but they're *not* nice,—leastways, not to my thinking; the rains and the winds have beat 'em down so."

"I think they are lovely;—don't you, Faith? And these little red berries, why, they are as bright as your cheeks, Aline!"

"Who's a-flattering now?" said the gipsy girl, archly. But the rosy colour in her face, that deepened as she spoke, showed that she was not displeased at the compliment.

"Now sit down on the grass, and tell me where you have been, and what you have been doing since I saw you," said Ethel.

"I've been here and there and everywhere; and I've been hop-picking and harvesting, and singing and dancing, and hawking about the baskets and skewers that Tim and Ralph makes."

"You have not been idle," said Ethel.

"And I've been to church; I had to fight my way into it, though,—and I've got a Testament with a blue cover; it's in my pocket, I brought it to show you."

"Where did you get it?" said Ethel, as she took the well-bound little volume and examined it with interest.

"An old gentleman—he was a queer shave, I can tell you—give it to me, and he gave me a brand new half-crown with it. I liked the half-crown best, but that's gone long since, more's the pity."

"Can you read your Testament?" said Faith, gently.

"I reads the little words, but not the big ones, so it ain't of much use my trying; I only makes a mess of it." She turned abruptly to Ethel, and pointing to Faith said, "Who is she?"

"She is my friend and Mrs. Atherton's niece, and she is very fond of little gipsy girls."

"Is she?" said Aline, doubtfully. "What gipsy girls have you known?" she asked Faith.

"None; I have not lived in the country till lately, but I have a pretty story in a book about them."

"A story in a book! As if you could like anybody in a book! Besides, what business has anybody to put us in a book?"

"It was not a story about *you*," said Ethel. "*I* shall write that some day, and I shall say Aline was a good little girl, and she gathered wild flowers for me, and did not forget me when she went a long way off."

"No, I did not forget you, 'cause you was kind to me, and 'cause you was sorry I hadn't got no mother."

"*I* have not got any mother," said Faith.

Aline looked at her.

"Haven't you really? Then you are as bad off as I am."

"But my mother has gone to be with Jesus, and Jesus is going to take care of me till I see mother again."

"Who told you so?" she said, quickly.

"Jesus told me Himself, in this book," answered Faith, putting her hand on the Testament.

"Who is Jesus? Ralph said He was a good sort of man that they talked about in the churches."

"He is more than a man, He is God's own Son, and He can do everything, and can give us whatever we want."

"Where is He? can we see Him?"

"He is in heaven; we cannot see Him now, but we shall see Him some day."

"I don't believe in folks that I can't see," objected Aline.

"Why, you cannot see the Queen, but yet you know there is a Queen," said Faith.

"And I cannot see my mother now," said Ethel, "because she is in another country, but I love her just the same, and it is so nice to feel that she loves me still."

"Would not you like to learn to read better? and then you could read all there is about Jesus in this pretty little book of yours," said Faith.

"Gipsies ain't no scholars, and I hates schools. I couldn't bear to be shut up in one, like a chicken in a hen-coop."

"But if you could learn without going to school?" said Faith.

"How could I?"

"Perhaps aunt will let *me* teach you; I will ask her; would you like that?"

"I don't know that I should mind it. If I could read and write, and speak proper, I might be able to earn my living easier."

While Faith and Aline were settling this question, Ethel went into the house to provide some luncheon for the little gipsy. Margaret was out, and Patty by no means approved of giving her any food. She told Ethel how rudely Aline had behaved in rushing through the opened door into the garden, and though Ethel could not help laughing at the audacity of the little girl, she promised Patty that she would try to show her what a liberty she had taken. But her reproof utterly failed; either because she did not make it forcible enough, or because Aline was too dull to see that she had committed any offence.

"I'll come in any way you like, it's all the same to me," she said, smiling; "I can climb over the wall another time if you think it would save your girl trouble."

But why she should not have walked out at the

back door when she saw Miss Ethel and Faith in the garden, was so incomprehensible to her that Ethel gave up in despair, and suffered her to eat her bread and cheese in peace. Ethel had wisely carried it to her in the garden, not wishing Aline to come in contact with Patty until Patty had recovered her usual good temper.

Aunt Margaret did not at once say "yes" to Faith when she asked if she might teach the little gipsy girl.

"I will think about it, Faith, and you must think too," she said in her quiet way; "because it does not do to begin anything of that sort unless one is quite prepared to keep to it, and to carry it on."

But the next day aunt Margaret gave Faith full leave to have Aline for her pupil if she chose; and she arranged for her to have one hour three times in the week for her instructions. Faith was very glad of the permission, for she had not in the least changed her mind on the subject, and the next time she saw Aline she told her how willing she was to help her in learning to read and write.

"Will your aunt let you come, Aline? have you said anything to her about it?"

"Yes, I told her directly I got back, as to how you'd half promised to get me a spelling-book, and to be my missis, and she only laughed at me. Not that I cared for her jeering of me. 'Let them laugh as wins,' says I; 'if you likes to stick to the ignorance you was born with, I doesn't.'"

"But, Aline, you should not speak so disrespectfully to your aunt."

"Bless you, she don't mind how I speaks; we ain't accustomed to mince our words up as you do."

"She did not object then to your learning?"

"La, no, why should she? 'Please yourself, child, and you'll please me,' she says, 'but I don't expect this new fit of your'n will last the week out.'"

"I hope it will last longer than that, Aline."

"It will last as long as you holds out, miss; *I* never give up anything yet that I took to."

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## Chapter XXIV.—The Old, Old Story.

Aline, notwithstanding all her independence and self-will, was a tractable little scholar. She obeyed Faith implicitly, never arguing or disputing any point with her, but simply followed all her directions, and steadily plodded on, day after day.

"You have been a very good girl," Faith said to her at the end of the first week; "I should not mind teaching twenty such children as you are."

"Shouldn't you really, miss? why not?"

"Because you give me so little trouble, Aline; you always do what I tell you."

"*Of course* I does, because you know best," said Aline, with an air of astonishment. "If it was *hop-picking*, now, or haymaking, or even singing *at fairs, I shouldn't let* you order me about. I should just grin at what you said, and go on my own ways. But when it comes to book-learning, miss, why, you're a deal more powerful at that than I am, and therefore I bends under directly, and am as meek as a lamb."

Aline never seemed to tire of her lessons. She was naturally quick, and they were not as much trouble to her as they are to slower children; still they required patient effort on her part, and the mere sitting still for an hour was rather an irksome duty to a wild little gipsy girl. But she had great strength of character; and having made up her mind that it was desirable to be able to read and write well, she did not swerve from her purpose.

Neither did Faith or Ethel; for I ought before to have informed you that they were joint sharers in this undertaking, although Ethel left most of the lessons to Faith, and did her part by telling Aline Bible stories, and teaching her Bible texts, when the spelling and reading were finished. Faith had been the means in God's hand of drawing Ethel to love the Saviour; and now Ethel, in her turn, wanted to win the little gipsy girl's heart to trust in Him.

It was surprising how soon Aline seemed touched by "the sweet story of old;" the old and yet the ever new story of the Babe that was born in Bethlehem. Perhaps one reason was that she had never heard it before.

When Ethel described to her how kind and gentle Jesus was—how He spent all His life in doing good to people; in healing the sick, curing the lame, and giving sight to the blind; and how He took the little children up in His arms and blessed them; and yet how cruelly He was treated at last, put to death, and crucified between two thieves,—Aline sat with her eyes fixed upon her, drinking in all that was said, and looking as if she were afraid of losing a word.

She was very indignant with the chief priests and the Pharisees.

"If I had been there, I would not have let them kill that good Jesus," she said; "why didn't somebody hinder them?"

Then Ethel tried to explain to her that Jesus died instead of us to save us from our sins, and that He did it willingly, out of love to us; and as she went with her over the last hours of our Saviour's life on earth, and spoke of the bitter pain which He suffered, and of the crown of thorns that was put on His head, and of His hands and feet that were nailed to the cross, Aline's black eyes filled with tears, and presently she leaned her head on the table, and sobbed aloud.

"What makes you cry, Aline?" said Ethel.

"I couldn't help it," she answered, swallowing down her tears, "I couldn't help it, 'cause I loves Him so!"

"Why do you love Him, Aline?" said Ethel, gently.

"'Cause He died for me, a poor little gipsy

girl; wasn't it good of Him? Tell me some more about Him."

This request was often repeated by Aline; for after that day, as soon as her reading and writing lessons were over, she generally asked to be told "more about Jesus."

I have said it was surprising how eagerly and how quickly Aline received the simple truths which Ethel endeavoured to unfold to her. But it was not surprising, for Aline had a better teacher than either Ethel or Faith. God was guiding that little one by His Spirit into the ways of pleasantness and the paths of peace; and almost as soon as she heard of the Saviour her heart was opened to love and trust Him.

Aline had to bear a good deal of ridicule from the gipsies, on account of her desire to improve in reading and writing. "Why should she want," they said, "to be wiser than her elders? They had got on well enough, though they did not know one letter from another, and had never tried to handle a pen; but it was just like Aline's conceit to set herself up alongside of the gentry; and they supposed she'd be a-deserting of them presently, and be mean-spirited enough to live in a house instead of breathing the free air of heaven." The only one that did not laugh at her was Ralph. He was very fond of Aline, and though they sometimes quarrelled, their quarrels were soon made up again; and if Aline ever needed a defender, Ralph was always ready for that post. He was proud of the notice taken of Aline by her friends at the farm; he was proud, too of her aspirations after knowledge; it seemed to mark her out as above the other girls in the camp.

"I know I could get on better myself if I wasn't so stupid at book-learning," he said to Aline, "it's ignorance that keeps us all so back'ards."

"Then why not learn, Ralph?" she said, eagerly; "it is not very hard, not half so hard as I thought it was."

"Oh, it would be easy enough for *me*, of course," said Ralph, in that tone of conscious superiority which boys so often use in speaking about a girl's acquirements, "but I ain't got nobody to teach me."

"Couldn't you go to the parson's night school that Miss Ethel was a-telling me of?"

"Not I! to be sneered at as a gipsy, and to be asked who stole Farmer Thwaites's chickens."

Aline did not wonder that Ralph shrank from such companionship. She was silent for a minute, and then she said,—

"Ralph, if you would let me help you, I think I could."

"How could you help me?"

"Every evening, when I comes back from the farm, I could tell you what I've been a-doing there, and then you could learn it too. You'd pick it up in no time, 'cause you're so much sharper than I am."

This little bit of flattery overcame Ralph's reluctance to be taught by a girl; and he condescendingly agreed to accept of Aline's assistance.

## THE TRUE HISTORY OF MY PETS.

### TOLD TO THE LITTLE ONES.

### IN THREE PARTS—PART III.

"RATTLER also lived to be sixteen, and to the last morning of his life he managed to totter to the dining-room window to get his breakfast as usual, a thing he had done nearly all his life. Although so old, yet he was happy, and had no disease, so that he died a perfectly natural death.

"'Pluck' was brought by one of your uncles from a dog-fancier in town. He was a rather small terrier, and I believe one of the principal beauties of such dogs is to have no white about them. He was brought home on a dark evening, and his master could not understand what made his hands so black. They were equally so the next morning after he had handled the dog, so the creature was washed, when it was found he had a perfectly white chest, and had been *black-leaded* to make him appear more valuable. We always afterwards called this patch of white 'Pluck's white waistcoat.' In his disposition he was the opposite of Bob, being a comfortable, good-tempered, easy-going personage, and a fair guard; but he had one deeply rooted besetting sin. Can you guess, children, what it was?"

"Perhaps he jumped up on little children with his muddy feet," suggested tidy little Mabel.

"No, it was not that."

"Was he cross and disagreeable when his tail was pulled?" said Rosie.

"No."

"Perhaps he bit little baby girls," said Lily.

"No, it was something quite different."

"I know," cried Willie; "he stole things off the table, as our cat does sometimes."

"You are nearest, Willie," I said. "Pluck's great fault was *greediness*. No one could believe the amount that dog ate in one day, nor the quiet and respectable way in which he did it. He would first breakfast with the servants, but when we came downstairs would be sitting on the rug in the most decorous way, as if nothing had passed his lips since the previous day. Then, after a good meal with us, he would vanish with the breakfast-things, and make friends with the cook and butcher. At twelve he would go with the gardener to a tavern near, where working men had their dinner, and get sundry scraps from them, and then hurry home in time for our lunch; directly after which he would go off to the kitchen to get a second supply. He always had late dinner with us, and supper with the servants. It

was only by degrees that this propensity dawned upon us. Visitors would imagine he was half starved from the way in which he would stand on his hind legs, and imploringly touch their arms to draw attention to himself. They would sometimes say, 'How hungry this dog is! he will even eat *bread!*' little knowing that he happened to be very fond of bread.

"Pluck was very fond of driving, and would pretend the greatest affection for us by following us into the carriage till we were fairly off, and then would whine and cry to get on to the coach-box and sit by the coachman, of whom he was very fond. He could not manage to climb up outside, and so he devised this means of doing so.

"He was once taken to a new place, quite ten miles away, in a close carriage, and asleep on my lap all the time. After he had been a few hours at the house where we were going to stay, I went with Pluck to a shop close by. On coming out I suddenly missed him, and though he was sought in every direction, he could not be found. We gave him up for lost, but we heard the next day that in less than three hours of the time of missing him he appeared at home footsore and covered with mud. How he could have found his way I cannot think. I suppose his instinct guided him to his real home rather than to the new one a few hundred yards off.

"His propensity for eating, like most other indulged faults, at last led him into grievous crime. We possessed a cat who had a young family of three kittens, Lily, Tabby, and Snow. They all lived in the kitchen, and were a pretty sight. Pluck had always been good friends with the cat, and evidently much admired the youthful trio, for he was constantly with them, licking them, playing with them, and showing great affection for them. One morning, when the cook came downstairs, she found puss in a state of great agitation, and mourning over some mutilated remains of poor Tabby. It was instantly decided that she must have strayed from her mother, and been caught and devoured by a monster of a rat, so for safety the family was conveyed to the cowshed and put comfortably in the hay there, whilst rat-traps were set in the kitchen.

"Pluck used to come and pay visits to puss, but we observed that she did not receive him graciously, nor would she allow him to bestow much affection on her two children. One day Snow was missing, and we feared the rats had found her out in their new domicile, and at the same time the mother became still more inveterate against Pluck, whom she would drive from the place, which we thought very ungrateful of her.

"A short time afterwards your uncle Augustus and myself were sitting in a room looking into the garden, when we saw Pluck flying across the lawn with something in his mouth. 'Why, Pluck is going to bury a bone till he is hungry,' said uncle *Augustus; 'let us go* and watch him.' We ran *out and followed him to* a shrub, where he was already vigorously scratching, and when we came near, to our surprise he growled at us.

"The bush was so thick that we could not see his operations very distinctly, so we pretended to go away; and when we saw him withdraw my brother dug up the ground, and what *do* you think we saw?"

"Not dear, sweet little Lily!" screamed our own Lily, taking her thumb out of her mouth in her excitement, and then sucking it more vigorously than before, whilst she looked up into my eyes intently.

"Yes," I said, reluctantly; "I fear it was the poor little kitty."

"Oh, what a naughty, wicked dog! the big policeman should have taken him away to prison."

"We *did* put him into a kind of prison, for we showed him the kitten, and then tied him up to his kennel for several days, and kept reminding him of it, so that he quite knew what his punishment meant. The little hypocrite had pretended all this affection that the mother might leave him with them, and that he might then carry them away and eat them, as he had done with Tabby. He had evidently hidden Lily till he could dig her up and eat her unobserved, and had probably done the same with Snow.

"When we had had him about seven years he became very ill, owing, I believe, to over-eating, and was sent to the dog doctor to be cured. Just as he was getting well he got loose in the outhouse where he was kept one night, gnawed a hole through the door, and got away. Although it was not half a mile from our house we never heard of him again. We think he must have been seen by some policeman, who possibly thought he was mad (as his complaint made him foam slightly at the mouth at times), and killed him on the spot, possibly with a blow from his staff. What a moral!

"It may be said we were more to blame than he was in giving him the food, but for a long time we had no idea of his number of meals, as he took us in by getting them so slily.

"The last interesting dog we had was Jip, an Esquimaux, which papa brought home to me just after we married; but we did not have him very long, as he had Bob's trick of barking, and his long hair was so very tiresome in continually coming off and sticking to one's clothes, and all the furniture, rugs, &c.; but he was a most clever dog. I have only time, however, to tell you of two curious things he did.

"One day I was reading *Punch*, when papa jokingly came behind me, caught it from me, and sat down to look at it at the other end of the room. Jip was sitting by me looking on, and I said in a low voice, 'That was too bad, Jip, was it not? Get it back for me.' In a moment, with a stealthy step, Jip went behind papa's chair, suddenly snatched the paper from him, and brought it in triumph to me.

"Papa used at that time to change his boots in the hall after breakfast before going out, but one

Sunday, after we had had Jip for a week or two, he was in his room about an hour after his usual time for going out, when, to his astonishment, the dog ran in with one of the boots in his mouth, which he laid at papa's feet, and then ran off for the other; when, sitting down, he began watching to see whether they would be put on, evidently feeling sure they had been forgotten.

"But, children, there is the tea-bell, so off and away! I must tell you some more about my pets another time." VIOLET.

## THE DAFFODIL ROOT.

A LITTLE brown root,
With a tiny green shoot,
Was thrown on the road-side one day;
It might have been ill,
For it lay very still,
Till a little girl passed by that way.

She stopped, and she said,
"Poor thing! it looks dead;
But I'll carry it home, and I'll try
To nurse it with care,
And perhaps it will bear
Some sort of a flower by and by."

With such a kind look,
She tenderly took
The poor little waif from the ground;
And then in her small,
Cosy black-and-white shawl
She carefully wrapped it around.

At home she soon got
A snug little pot,
And filled it with sand and with mould;
And in it the root,
With its little green shoot,
She covered up safe from the cold.

She watered it oft,
To keep its heart soft,
And make it grow healthful and good;
The sun and the dew,
And drops of rain too,
Each helped her as much as they could.

One tiny leaf grew,
And soon there were two,
And then, a green bud swelled between;
A week or two past,
And lo! at the last
Was a fine yellow daffodil seen.

Now try and be kind
Whenever you find
A stray little child; for it may,
If rescued from wrong,
Grow virtuous and strong,
And your help and affection repay.

NETTA LEIGH.

## A NOBLE SACRIFICE.

SOLUTION OF THE NINETIETH PICTURE STORY.

ALICE and Frank Raynor were the only children of Mr. John Raynor. Alice, the elder of the two, was a sweet, loving little girl, and was very much troubled at her brother's naughty ways (for sometimes, I am sorry to say, he was very cross and naughty). One day he had been very unkind to his sister and disobedient to his father, a thing of late he had done frequently; therefore Mr. Raynor determined to punish him.

He was a kind though stern father, and his little boy's disobedient ways troubled him very much; and so he decided, though much against his will, to whip his son severely.

Frank was frightened at his father's manner, and at the stick he held in his hand; he begged hard to be forgiven, but Mr. Raynor was in earnest, and wished to give him a lesson, so he took hold of his arm and gave him two or three strokes with the stick (not very hard ones, it is true).

Frank was weeping bitterly, when Alice came up, and falling on her knees, she begged her father to forgive him.

Mr. Raynor replied, "Frank must suffer for his fault, I cannot allow it to pass unnoticed again, for it is not the first time."

Alice was so sorry; at last a bright thought struck her, and she said, "Papa, may I take Frankie's punishment? I am so sorry for him; please, papa, do let me."

Mr. Raynor asked her why she wished to do so. She replied, "Oh, papa, I do love Frank so much, that I want to be punished instead of him."

"Very well, Alice," her father replied; and pointing to Frank, he continued, "You may go Frank, your sister will take your place, but remember she will go to her room and remain there until you are sorry."

Frank, delighted, ran off, and Alice said with her eyes cast on the ground, "Thank you, papa, oh! thank you."

"Mr. Raynor replied, "When Frank has asked my pardon, and promises never to be so naughty again, then all will be right; until then you, my child, must bear his punishment as you have undertaken to do so."

With that Mr. Raynor left her. Alice threw herself into a chair and burst into tears; not because she had to bear her brother's punishment, but because she wished he was a better boy.

She was thus weeping when Frank opened the door; he stood there watching her; pride would not allow him to say, "Sister, I am sorry;" and after standing in the doorway for a few moments he went away.

Then Alice remembered what her father had said, so she ran upstairs to her bedroom, and there she stayed. At tea-time a glass of milk and a piece of bread were brought to her; she ate the bread cheerfully, thinking of these words,—"Bear ye one another's burdens." "Am I helping to bear Frankie's?" she thought to herself.

Meanwhile Frank had gone out with one of his friends to fly a kite; although it went beautifully, Frank was not happy, and presently he slipped away from his companion, and ran home; without waiting to take his cap off, he crept upstairs and tapped at his sister's door. When she opened it he threw his arms around her, saying at the same time, "Oh, Alice, I do beg your pardon, I am so sorry I have caused you all this trouble! Oh, how could I let you stay here all this time, because I was such a bad boy? believe me, sister, I never will do so again."

Alice kissed him, saying, "Frankie dear, of course I forgive you; now let us go to papa."

They went downstairs together, and found their papa in the dining-room; he looked up at their entrance, and said, "Well, children." "Oh, papa," cried Frank, "I'll never be so naughty again, please forgive me, and don't, oh! don't punish Alice any more because I was naughty." "Yes, Frank," replied his papa, "I will forgive you; but I don't want my son to grow up a disagreeable man," and he added, taking Alice on his knee and kissing her, "Has Alice forgiven you also?" "Oh yes, papa, she has," replied Frank. "My dear forgiving little girl!" said Mr. Raynor, fondly stroking Alice's hair. "Now," he continued, "come with me; I want to show you a picture."

The children followed their father to the library, where at one end of the room there stood an immense picture; it represented the Crucifixion. Alice, with her arm lovingly around her brother, gazed earnestly at it; she said at last, "Oh, papa, was it not kind of Jesus to be crucified for our sakes?"

"Yes, children," Mr. Raynor replied, "Jesus is all kindness, and every naughty action we do, it grieves Him so much, yet He is always ready to forgive."

Frank hung his head, saying, "I grieved Him to-day, papa." "Yes, Frank," said his papa, drawing a chair towards him, and sitting down upon it, "you did; but if you ask Him He will pardon you, as He does every one who asks Him. Look," he continued, pointing to the picture, "at the dying thief, for instance, how readily Jesus pardoned him! Go on, my little children, loving and helping one another, and walking in the path of righteousness, that you may one day live with Him in heaven."

*WILHELMINA C. (15).*
*Wakefield, Yorkshire.*

## PICTURE STORY.

### No. XCII.

HONOURABLE MENTION.—Charlotte A., Mary H. H., Agnes R. C., Emmie A. C., Alice B. B., Emily S. W., Susan G., Matilda G., Ethel M. J., Bessie C. M'D., Beatrice W., Mary G. C., Sallie B., Edith S., Edith M. B., Jessie M. B., Lizzie H., Alice M. J., T., Clara T., Mary P., Alyce A. H., Mary R. R., Annie F. B., Alice P., Florence J. C., Laura M. E. S., Jessie K., Eleanor and Lilian S., Mary A. H., Lilla M. T., Primrose, Edith G. H., Emma S C., Elizabeth A. B., Julius H. S., Frank L. P., Robert C., Arthur T. V. B., Samuel S. S., W. Cosmo G. L.

The Rules were given in our January magazine, and must be adhered to strictly. Two friends must not join in the same story. The full name and address must be given every month. Do not post your answers to the ninety-second story later than the 8th of this month. Thanks for photographs. It is quite proper that the sun should paint portraits for us of our Sunshine friends.

EDITOR.

[IDA'S SELF-DENIAL.]

# AUNT MILLICENT'S CHARGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SOLDIER HAROLD," &C.

## CHAPTER XVI.—AN ACT OF JUSTICE.

AGATHA and Johnnie came back from their walk, and Arnold was still shut up with his father in his study. An hour afterwards he came out with red eyes, and rushed upstairs, almost upsetting poor little Johnnie by the way; he had been waiting and lingering about, wondering what had become of his brother.

"Oh, Arnold!" he exclaimed, "what have you been doing? I have wanted you such a long time. We have found such a funny creature down on the sands, Agatha and I. I want you to come and look at it; I have put it in a tub in the yard. Do come, Arnold."

But Arnold sprang past him without any answer, and was safely shut up in his own room by the time Johnnie had finished speaking. He went to aunt Millicent with his grievance.

"Suppose I come to look at it, Johnnie dear; won't that do as well? Arnold cannot come just now, I think."

Johnnie's face brightened. Auntie would do a great deal better, because perhaps she could tell him the name of the thing he had found.

It was a pretty specimen of the star-fish, and Johnnie soon forgot his little disappointment, and was quite interested in the description auntie gave of some of the species; how that some of them disliked to be touched, and were so brittle that they would break off an arm or two, or sometimes not leave one attached to the body, if they were approached too roughly.

But Millicent's attention was a little distracted, for she had caught a glimpse of Arnold's tear-

stained face, and her heart ached for him in his trouble.

No one saw the boy again until prayer-time, when he glided in and sat down in his seat. Mr. Grey's manner that night was more grave and solemn than usual; and when the household rose from their knees, instead of allowing them to disperse as they always did, he bade them wait a little, as he had something to say to them.

Mr. Grey called Martha to him; she came up hesitating and trembling, perhaps she partly guessed what he wanted, and yet she feared lest he should be going to blame her further. However, her fears were soon set at rest, for Mr. Grey laid his hand on her shoulder and looked at her kindly, and then he spoke.

"I am very sorry that this little girl has for so long been the subject of unjust suspicion, by myself as well as the rest. And as you all know of what she has been supposed guilty, I think it but fair to her that you should all know too that the real offender has this day been discovered, and Martha's character stands as it did before this unhappy affair; nay, rather far deeper and true from the trial it has gone through. Arnold, come here." And Mr. Grey's voice, perhaps half unconsciously, took a sterner tone as he turned to his son.

Arnold came and stood before his father, with his back as much as possible towards every one else; but Mr. Grey quietly turned him round, so that his flushed face could be seen.

"Now, Arnold, repeat in a few words what you have told me this evening."

But Arnold only muttered a word or two that was scarcely audible, and then he covered his face with his hands, and laid both on his father's shoulder.

Mr. Grey took no notice of him, but he did not press him to speak. But he himself related how that Arnold, and Arnold only, was to blame for the disappearance of the pencil-case. Agatha uttered an exclamation of surprise, but it was checked by a motion of her father's hand.

When he had finished speaking Arnold raised his head again, and took a step forward to where Martha was still standing, feeling very uncomfortable.

"I am very sorry, Martha," he said, with a quivering of the lip, and yet he spoke up so that he could be heard through the room, "I am very sorry! will you forgive me?"

"Oh, Master Arnold, please don't say anything about it. I have forgiven it all long ago."

"Yes," said Mr. Grey, "Martha has forgiven, or she would not have acted as she has done. I think few of us would have shown the same forbearance, willing rather to suffer than to be the cause of a possibly unjust accusation; for I know that she was all but certain all the time who had done the deed; and I honour her for her behaviour *in the matter. Yes, my* child," he added, kindly, "*you will be none the worse* for this trial."

And then he took from the little table at his side, and put into Martha's hands, a Bible; and on the fly-leaf was written:—

"For Martha Bird; from Rev. B. Grey. In remembrance of much patience shown through a time of trial from unjust suspicion." And then the date.

Martha received it with burning cheeks; she felt herself unworthy of such a gift, but she thought she should value it more than anything she possessed.

"As for you, Arnold," Mr. Grey went on in a tone of deep grief, "you and I have talked this painful subject over already. But remember for the next week I do not wish to see you down amongst us; therefore, except during your school hours and your walk to and fro from Low Marston, you must keep in your own room."

Arnold said nothing, only bowed his head in token of assent; but there was a loud cry from Johnnie, who was utterly dismayed at the sentence pronounced upon his brother. It made almost an equal impression upon Martha, who, forgetting her usual shyness, started forward, exclaiming,—

"Oh, please, sir, please don't punish him like that! Oh, poor Master Arnold! it was nothing, sir. Oh, forgive him!" And she stood with clasped hands and an earnest pleading face, not daring to say more, but yet sorry beyond measure that Arnold should be punished.

Mr. Grey looked at her, but his purpose did not waver, though Arnold's eager eyes seemed to say he thought it might.

"No, my kind little girl, it must not be. It is not so much for his mischievous act towards you that I wish Arnold to be separated from us for a time, but because he has told a lie. My boy has spoken a direct, deliberate lie. And come what will, cost what it may, I must have my children truthful.—Good night, Arnold, and when we meet again, God grant you may be in a better mind."

Mr. Grey folded his arms round the boy, kissed him once tenderly on his forehead that he might know he was not angry, only grieved; and then he bid him go.

"For the rest of us," he added, "let this be a lesson to us all, not to judge hastily. Appearances are not always to be depended upon."

And then the servants were allowed to leave the room. Martha disappeared immediately, for she felt as if she could not bear to hear the comments of her companions just then; and there was much talk in the kitchen quarters that night.

"Well, I never!" was nurse's exclamation. "To think that it should be Master Arnold after all! When master said it you might have knocked me down with a feather! I was struck all of a heap, as the saying is."

"It was a great shame of him to do it!" said Anne the cook, indignantly. "I have often been sorry enough for that poor little girl, even when I thought she was to blame; and I agree with

master,—she has borne it all wonderful. For I must say, between ourselves, nurse, you have been a bit harsh with her at times; or above a bit, if I spoke the real truth."

Nurse drew herself up.

"I know my own duty, thank you, cook. It seemed as if it could be nobody but her. But for it to be Master Arnold, why, I could never have thought it!"

Martha was seen no more that night: but when she went as usual the next morning to help Agatha to dress, that young lady turned round abruptly when the little maid was busy putting up her hair, and seized both her hands, thereby stopping the hair-brush in its descent upon her head.

"Martha, I don't deserve that you should do a single thing for me. I have been something like a big brown bear for the last few weeks, I expect. But I know you now, and I shall never suspect you of anything bad again."

"Thank you, Miss Agatha," was all Martha's answer: but from that time there was perfect trust and confidence between the young lady and her little attendant.

But no one seemed more glad than little Hugh that Martha's trial was over. He danced about her, put his arms round her, and laughed and cried all in a breath.

"Do you know, Martha," he whispered in her ear, "every night after I was in bed I made a little prayer that God would make it all plain, and you see He has."

"Yes, dear Master Hugh," said Martha, smiling through her tears, "Miss Grey said the dear Lord Jesus knew all, and we must have patience and wait His time."

Hugh's childish eyes were quick to see that nurse had not yet laid aside her dislike of Martha, nor her suspicious watch over her conduct. He climbed up on to her knee that evening when Martha was out of the room.

"Nursie dear, Martha is good now, isn't she?"

"Indeed I don't know, Master Hugh," answered nurse, with a short laugh. "I suppose, according to some folks' reckoning, she has been good all the time."

"Yes. Papa says she has behaved wonderfully, and she ought to be quite happy now it is all found out, nursie!" and Hugh's arms were twined tighter round her neck, and his voice was soft and low, "won't *you* tell Martha it is all right?"

Nurse did not answer; only told the child it was time for bed; but the kiss she gave him when she had tucked him comfortably into his little crib was a more earnest one than usual.

And when Martha brought her sewing and sat down in the nursery window, nurse came gravely up to her, put one hand on her shoulder and with the other turned her face to the light so that she could see it. There were traces of the past trial there still, and the eyes looked heavy and shadowy, as though they had been far too often acquainted with tears for so young a girl. "Miss Grey was right; I might have known it," she said, half to herself: then aloud to Martha, "My dear, I am afraid I have been a bit harsher over this business than I ought to have been; but you must forgive me, Martha. We will trust one another better another time."

"Oh, Mrs. nurse!" was Martha's surprised exclamation, and it seemed to be all she could say. For her pleasure in the restored confidence of the household had been considerably spoiled by the knowledge that nurse's opinion of her had not changed.

"There! we will say no more about it. It is not over-pleasant for a body like me to own themselves in the wrong; but I do this time, and I shall believe your word for the future, Martha."

And nurse put her arms round Martha, drew her head on her shoulder, and kissed her. If she had only done that at first, what a comfort it would have been to the poor child! and what a great deal of trouble and sorrow it would have saved her! But nurse, like many more people, was loth to give up her own opinion.

And now we must go back a little, as I want to tell you something concerning Ida Gascoigne, which happened about the time that Arnold got into trouble over Mr. Jackson's spectacles.

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## Chapter XVII.—Ida's Request.

Agatha was just putting away her books after the morning lessons, and Millicent was folding up her work, when Ida's bright face appeared at the schoolroom window.

"Aunt Millicent, may I come in? Agatha can go if she likes; I want to talk to you."

Agatha threw back her head in a half-indignant manner, but she said nothing; only went out of the room carrying that portion of her person as high as she conveniently could.

Ida sprang in through the low window, and put herself down on a stool at Millicent's feet, laying a hand on her knees, and looking up into her face.

"Aunt Millicent, I have come to ask you a favour; and you are always so charming and good, that I know you will grant it."

"Indeed," said Millicent, smiling; "but I must know what it is before I can speak so positively."

"Won't you even say, 'I will grant it if it be in my power'? Do go that far, aunt Millicent; because it is in your power, quite!"

But Millicent shook her head. She was not going to be drawn in to make any rash promises.

"Well, then, I will ask it in a most exceeding grave and proper manner, as papa himself would do if he were here."

And springing up, she stood before Millicent with folded hands, and a most demure expression,

only the hidden face would keep peeping out from the corners of the mouth.

"Miss Grey, this morning my dear and respected papa has received a letter, which in plain English has bothered him not a little. You know that Fräulein is away for her holidays. Well, the letter was from her,—no, not from her, but from some one belonging to her, saying that she is very ill and will not be able to come back for a month at least, perhaps longer; and she is sore distressed, and hopes the good Herr Gascoigne will not deprive her of her situation, but will in his great goodness and kindness wait till she is well again. You can imagine the state of mind papa was in on reading this intelligence; for Fräulein was to have come back this very week, and then his tiresome daughter would have been under control again; but now, you see, she is still on his hands. Whether it was my thought, or Basil's, or papa's, or all three put together, I cannot say; I only know that every one thinks it the best plan that can possibly be devised, if I might come to you. Oh, dear aunt Millicent!" and Ida's manner suddenly changed, and she threw her arms round Millicent, and spoke, not in mirth or fun, but with real grave, deep, loving earnestness, "oh, do say you will have me! may I come here, and do lessons along with Agatha? it would be the very thing of all others that I should most enjoy. Aunt Millicent, say yes, please do!"

Millicent returned Ida's warm embrace, but she did not speak for a minute or two.

"I cannot say yes, just all in a moment, Ida dear; it will require some consideration, and some other opinion besides mine. And it seems to me that my hands are full enough already," she added, with a little sigh.

Ida's bright, eager look fell a little.

"I will give you no trouble; at least, no more than I can possibly help; and I do think, if I can be good anywhere it is with you, aunt Millicent," she added earnestly.

"Well, my darling, we will see. I shall be very glad to help you out of your difficulty if I can."

"Do you know what Basil said, after papa had said that was the very best arrangement that could be made if you would only agree to it? he said, 'If you could grow up like aunt Millicent, I should be proud of my sister!' and oh, I will try!"

"You should try to follow a far higher example than mine, dear Ida,—changed into His likeness," she added, softly.

Mr. Gascoigne had not left the whole of the arrangement to Ida; he saw Mr. Grey, and named the matter to him.

Mr. Grey saw no objection whatever. Perhaps he had not noticed that his sister's step about the house was slower and more languid than it had been of old, and that her eye had lost some of its brightness; and that though her interest and *sympathy were ever ready* when called upon, yet *she was graver and not so light*-hearted as formerly. I say Mr. Grey could not have noticed this, or he would have hesitated to add to her care and responsibility.

And yet I do not know but what Ida's presence lessened the burden, rather than increased it; her bright, warm expressions of affection soothed and cheered Millicent, for they were a great contrast to Agatha's cold, matter-of-course sort of manner.

However, it was settled that Ida was to come to the vicarage every morning at ten, stay for the early dinner, and return home again by four or five in the afternoon; and the arrangement gave satisfaction to all parties except Agatha; and even Agatha after a while could not but own that it was rather pleasant than otherwise to have a companion in her lessons; and I am sure both girls got on with their studies a great deal better together than they would have done apart.

Ida was delighted, and when one month had lengthened into two, and another letter came saying that Fräulein was not better, nor likely to be, and would not be able to return to Rothwell, Ida was very sorry for her governess, of course; but she could not be sorry for herself; she so very much preferred Miss Grey to half a dozen Fräuleins.

And even Mrs. Gascoigne condescended to remark, after her languid fashion, that she had very much improved since going to the vicarage, her manners had become so much more refined and ladylike; and she hoped Miss Grey would continue the charge of her; she should look upon it as a personal favour to herself if she would. Ida's cheeks glowed; but it was not for herself but for her teacher that she valued the praise.

Ida was learning something more than English, French, or German, during those weeks. She was closely watching her gentle instructress; and Millicent's sweet, unselfish ways were by no means lost upon her.

Breakfast at the Hall was always rather a scramble during the holidays; for of course Mrs. Gascoigne never appeared at the family table at that time of morning; indeed more often than not she kept to her own rooms the whole of the day. Fräulein presided at the coffee-pot when she was there, and then some sort of order was kept; but in her absence things were left to go pretty much as they could. Mr. Gascoigne was generally first at the table; then the boys would wander in, and Ida would invariably rush to her seat when the meal was half over, having stayed in bed till the last minute.

But one day a chance word from Millicent set her thinking whether this style of things could not be altered.

The next morning, when Mr. Gascoigne entered the breakfast-room, expecting his usual half-cold coffee and hard-boiled egg, he was surprised to see his arm-chair drawn up to the table, his *Times* newspaper cut and laid ready to his hand, and the urn hissing and bubbling on the table, saying pretty plainly that something at least was hot; and then Ida stood before him in a clean fresh morning

dress, her hair brushed smoothy across her forehead (which by-the-by, it had not been lately at that time of day; it was such a bother, she had been wont to say; and it did not matter as there were only papa and the boys).

"Good morning, papa."

"Good morning, my dear; this looks pleasant and comfortable. And you look as bright and fresh as the morning, Ida," he added, eyeing her with a look of satisfaction.

Ida laughed.

"I got up a little sooner than usual this morning, that is all, papa; and you see it agrees with me, Oh, here are the boys, so now we can begin."

And Ida took her seat behind the coffee-pot, and dispensed it with its sugar and cream in a way that was pretty to see.

Everybody enjoyed that breakfast, with its lively chatter. Mr. Gascoigne lingered longer than usual, and his *Times* did not receive nearly its due share of attention.

When they rose, he put his hand lightly on Ida's shoulder and kissed her: he said nothing; but Ida knew that her self-denial had been noticed and appreciated.

It was a self-denial such as she had hitherto found it impossible to practise; for Ida and her bed were great friends in a morning, and to have to leave it even a few minutes earlier was a great consideration. But she felt she would gladly do it to bring about such a pleasant time as they had had.

Yet she felt the want of something. She had once or twice spent a night at the vicarage; and the way in which the household were summoned to prayers morning and evening had struck her as something she knew nothing about.

She was thinking of it now, rather gravely, as she stood at the window, and wishing it could be the custom at her home, when Basil came up to the outside of the window and leaned his elbow on the sill.

"Ida, have you a few minutes to spare before you go to Miss Grey? You look as if you had nothing much to do," he added, with a good-humoured smile.

Ida coloured.

"I did not mean to be idle," she said hastily. "I was thinking."

"What about? something grave, to judge by your looks."

But Ida would not tell him her thoughts.

"What did you want, Basil?" she asked quickly, by way of changing the subject. "I am going up to mamma directly, but I can give you a minute or two."

Basil raised his eyebrows.

"I thought Martin was quite enough for the mother's wants."

"Oh, Basil, it ought not to be so!" exclaimed Ida, with a little burst of emotion. "Mamma said I might go up and read to her," she added, more quietly; "I did yesterday morning, and I think she rather liked it. But I can wait a little bit, if you want me."

"Oh no. If that is the case, my business will keep. Go up to mother by all means."

Still Ida lingered. It was such a new thing for Basil to want her, that she was very curious as to the reason; but her brother would not tell her, so she had to go upstairs with her curiosity unsatisfied.

Gently and softly Ida entered Mrs. Gascoigne's room; once you would hardly have thought her movements could have been so quiet, but Ida had been learning many things lately.

"Are you awake, mamma? shall I read to you again?"

"Yes, do, child. I thought you would have been here before this, if you had not forgotten it altogether. My eyes are so weak that I cannot read myself."

The room was darkened; and Ida, coming out of the bright daylight outside could hardly see for a few minutes.

"Dear mamma," she said—and she would dearly have liked to throw her arms round her mother's neck, but Mrs. Gascoigne did not approve of such modes of showing affection—"I wish you could come downstairs again. Don't you think a pleasant drive would do you good?"

"Dear, Ida, how you talk! My last attack has only just passed off, leaving me weak and feeble as you see; were I to do as you say, I should soon be as bad as ever again. But you are only a child, and have strong, rude health; so you don't understand such things, which is a great blessing for you. Now go on with your reading; you will waste all the time in talking."

The book Mrs. Gascoigne had chosen was an interesting and instructive story; and as Ida read it with taste and spirit, her mother enjoyed it. But when the little timepiece struck half-past nine Ida was dismissed. If Miss Grey was able to effect such a change in her wild, wayward daughter in so short a time, she must be very clever, Mrs. Gascoigne thought; and the least they could do was to see that Ida was punctual in her attendance; so, though she often felt inclined to do so, she would not keep the girl beyond the given hour.

Ida ventured a soft, light kiss on her mother's cheek, and then she went away. No word of thanks had been spoken; but Ida was happy, for she knew she had been trying, in a very small, weak way perhaps, to gratify some one instead of herself.

When Ida came out of the hall door she was surprised to find Basil waiting for her outside it.

"Why, Basil," she exclaimed, "I thought you would have been at Low Marston by this time."

"Oh, we have a holiday to-day, didn't we tell you? it is Dr. Waybridge's birthday; so he honours the occasion by giving us a holiday."

"Then will you walk with me a little way?" Ida said; hoping that there she should hear what Basil had wanted her for.

Nor was she disappointed. They were scarcely out of the garden when Basil began,—

"Look here, Ida. I suppose Miss Grey does not keep you so fast but that she can be induced to let you off work for once in a way?"

"Oh dear no, I am sure she does not," Ida answered, with a merry laugh.

"Well, then, I want you to ask her to give you a holiday this afternoon; and you and I will go nutting in Pencrink Wood."

Ida's colour deepened, and her eyes sparkled pleasure; but she only said, "Do you really mean it, Basil?"

"Of course I do. I saw how disappointed you were when mother said you might not go with only Martin; so I determined to take you myself the very next opportunity; and the opportunity has come to-day, if you can only get a holiday too."

"Oh, I am sure aunt Millicent will readily grant it. Thank you, Basil. It will be a very great pleasure to me. But would not you and Ernest rather go off somewhere by yourselves?"

"No. Ernest and the Grey boys have some plans, I believe. But you and I are going to Pencrink Wood to enjoy ourselves."

Basil did not add that he had proposed this way of spending their holiday to Ernest; and his answer had been that he did not want to be bothered with girls.

Ida's heart was very light as she ran into the vicarage that morning.

Millicent gladly granted her the holiday; and a very happy afternoon she and Basil spent in the wood. They gathered quantities of nuts, and they gathered too a greater amount of knowledge and affection for each other. Basil found his sister much more expert at getting over stiles, and even pushing through a hedge or two, than he expected, and when he trod on her frock and tore off a large piece of the frill, she only laughed, and said it was well she had come supplied with a few pins, instead of making a trouble of it and getting into a bad temper as she would once have done.

And he gratified Ida exceedingly by talking to her of the various things they had made or were making up in the play room, and of other things; making a companion of her, in fact, in such a way as he had never done before.

They came home hot and tired; but they were both far happier than Ernest, who had been intent only upon pleasing himself.

"Thank you very much indeed, Basil," said Ida earnestly as they parted.

"It has been as much pleasure to me as to you, Ida," Basil answered; "we will have another jolly walk together some other day."

## IN CHRIST'S GARDEN.

WITHIN the Saviour's garden grow
Sweet flowers of every hue:
On them He makes the south wind blow,
On them distills His dew.

Fair lilies in their spotless white;
Meek violets in the shade;
Buds full of promise and delight,
In spring-time deck the glade.

How do they grow? They simply leave
Their culture to His care;
The showers He sends them they receive,
And breathe His balmy air.

With joy they share from day to day
The sunshine of His love;
And perfumed is each tender spray
With fragrance from above.

Oh happy plants! that grow and thrive
Beneath their Saviour's eye;
Their vigour they from Him derive,
Their wants He will supply.

And as He walks at sunset hours,
Around His garden fair,
It gives Him gladness when His flowers
Fresh grace and beauty wear.

And when His cherished flowers awhile
Have blest this world of ours,
He then transplants them with a smile,
To bloom in fairer bowers.

NETTA LEIGH.

## HOW WE FURNISHED OUR DOLL'S HOUSE

### CHAPTER V.—WE EMBROIDER CATS AND ELEPHANTS.

AUNTIE first began to show us how to do things of the kind by giving us each a square of paper and telling us to look at her, and fold our pieces as she folded hers. So we folded one corner down to meet the one opposite to it, then we folded over the other two corners together, and then we turned back each side, so that the square was made up in a three-cornered shape, with the centre of the square making one of the corners. This corner auntie told us to be careful of, so that we did not cut it away too much; and then she showed us how to cut pieces out of the sides of our folded paper, and to turn and twist our scissors about, and cut out small bits in the form of leaves and flowers if we could. Mine didn't look as though it would ever be anything but a lot of little holes and queer twists, but when auntie said I had cut out enough to be able to open it, I was quite surprised and delighted to see what pretty things there were on the paper square.

But auntie's mat was lovely. There were flowers all running out from the centre, and leaves

to them, with scrolls that looked like stumps of trees; and it all was so light, almost like lace, and papa said it would be nice for designs for curtains and carpets and wall-papers, and all kinds of things.

And since that time, whenever we could we have cut out paper as auntie showed us, until we have become quite clever with our scissors, and we haven't cut ourselves once, for you know our scissors haven't got sharp points, but are round, and they don't stick fast like those that nurse uses do, and even Gerty can now cut out things very nicely.

I dare say you think we are a long while in beginning to furnish our doll's house; I think so too, but you see we are preparing for it. Our next lesson, auntie tells me, is to be about embroidery, because we must learn to use a needle; but it isn't the kind of embroidery that nurse does, cutting out little holes on cambric, just to sew them round, or fill them up again, but embroidery with coloured wools on cardboard; but I'll tell you more about it another time.

Auntie is just giving the order for our doll's house, for we are to have a new one to furnish. There is to be a kitchen, and a dining-room, and a drawing-room and nursery, and several bedrooms; and auntie says she thinks "Maud," my big doll, whose hair I cut, is too big for our new doll's house, because, you see, she is nearly as big as Gerty, and quite as big as a live baby; so if Gerty and I learn to sew to help to make dresses for them, we are to have a lot of new dolls, some dressed like servants for the kitchen, and others like young ladies for the drawing-room; and there is to be the papa doll, and the mamma doll, and the little baby doll, and the bigger children. It will be a great deal of work, and I should scarcely hope it would ever be done if auntie and nurse had not both promised to help us a great deal; but we never feel that we don't know what to do with ourselves now, for there are so many things we have learnt since we first thought of furnishing our doll's house, that nurse says we don't get into half the mischief we used to do, and she is very glad that auntie has been kind enough to teach us.

How absurd boys are! There is that Willie, because he thinks men don't sew, he won't learn to embroider with us to-day; as though men don't use a needle as well as women, and as though it could hurt him to know more than he does, especially as nurse says that isn't much. But he is obstinate, he says he won't do "girl's work," though it isn't only girl's work, for cousin Charlie embroiders beautifully, and he is ever so much bigger than Willie, and ever so much cleverer too. I try to tell him all this, but he won't listen to me; instead of that he picks up a story-book and begins to read, and so Gerty and I have to do our work without him.

Auntie couldn't come to-day, or have us to see her, for gran'ma isn't well, and auntie has to stay with her; but she showed nurse what we were to do, and nurse says she can teach us quite well and easily. So nurse showed us a number of pieces of stiff paper almost as thick as cardboard. Some of them had figures of animals, and others of birds and fishes and flowers drawn upon them. The pictures were not finished off, and had only what nurse called the "outline" drawn; and on the mark that she said was the outline there was a little dot every quarter of an inch, and sometimes even at a less distance from each other. Then also nurse opened a packet and showed us a lot of wool and worsted of different shades and colours, and told us we might choose the colour we should like to use; so Gerty took scarlet, and I preferred blue, and then nurse had to find us some needles large enough to get the wool into, and which she showed us how to thread.

This took a long while, for the wool didn't like the needle's eye, and the needle's eye seemed to get offended because the wool would start away from it, and it really seemed as though they never would agree to work together; but at last nurse made them be more obliging, and when the wool was properly in the eye of the needle they both behaved very well.

When we were quite ready to begin, Gerty chose the outline of a cat,—she is very fond of cats; and I took the picture of an elephant, because it reminded me of the one I had a ride upon in the Zoological Gardens the last time I was there. Then nurse showed us how to push our needles through the paper where the dots were on the outline, letting the wool made by each stitch cover the line and mark the form of the animal. It was not quite as easy as it looked, because we had to go back again,—something like "back-stitching," nurse said, and Gerty pricked her fingers with the point of her needle, and as she was more frightened than hurt she began to cry, and nurse said she was a baby, and she must give up work for the day; but Gerty stopped crying then, and said she would work, so we went on again.

Needles are very awkward things, the points seem as though they will go just where they ought not to, and they prick one's fingers, and are altogether very troublesome, while the eyes won't keep the wool in them, but have to be threaded every now and then, as though once was not enough.

I must say I prefer making chairs and tables with sticks and peas, or modelling cups and saucers with clay, or weaving paper mats and carpets, or cutting out paper curtains and anti-macassars, to embroidering with the needle, though nurse says I shall one day be very fond of it, and that when auntie comes she will tell us about elephants, where they live and what they eat, and of what use they are, and lots of other things. And then nurse showed us how to embroider flowers in three or four colours, and it really was so pretty that I made up my mind to persevere until I could do it too. Besides, I must learn to

sew whether I like it or not, for if I don't we shall have no dolls for our house, and what would be the use of a doll's house without? It would be like a big empty mansion and no people to live in it; and it was only on condition of my helping to dress them that auntie promised us any dolls at all.

So I have worked on till at last I have finished my elephant, and a very respectable one it looks too. The trunk is very long, and the tusks look quite sharp, and it has long ears, and a little bit of an eye, and I am quite proud of it, because nurse says I have done it very nicely, and shall soon be a clever woman. And I have tried to help Gerty, but she won't let me, though she can't get pussy's whiskers on at all well.

I am glad to tell you, too, that Willie has changed his mind; he says it isn't such baby-work after all, for he thinks it will help him to draw, and show him how to colour things, and he says it is a splendid idea for making the outlines of maps, and marking the division of the countries; and he says if I don't bother him and let him have my coloured balls to play at conjuring with, he'll show me how to work a map which will be much easier, he says, than drawing one. But I am glad that Willie will work with us, it doesn't seem right for him to be sitting by and doing something else.

Auntie came to see us a few days after this, and she was so pleased to find how industrious we had been, and she said it was quite time I learnt to sew neatly, and she would begin to teach me at once, or we should never get our dolls dressed or their house furnished. So she gave me a piece of muslin and a needle with cotton in it, and a pretty little silver thimble which she had brought me, and having turned down the edge of the muslin, she showed me how to hem it.

I didn't find it at all lively work, not a bit like embroidering, and even that wasn't as nice as modelling, but auntie said it was very necessary since clothes could not be made without sewing, so I determined I would learn, and though it is true I sewed my finger nearly as much as the muslin, and the stitches were all little and big, and of various sizes, and though my hands were quite clean my cotton and work got dirty, still I got to the end of the strip that auntie gave me to do, and though I was tired after, I felt quite proud of my work, and showed it to papa, who said I was a very clever little woman, and that he would pay for some extra fine dresses for our dolls if I helped to make them.

So our doll's house is being made by a carpenter. There are to be real staircases to it; the doors are to open and shut; the windows are to be made of real glass, and it is to be as much like the house we live in as it can possibly be made.

Willie wants a coach-house and stables added to it, but auntie says they are useless, and that we shall have quite enough to do to fit up the house *without any* unnecessary additions. I think so *too, and next week we shall* begin to dress our dolls, and make the furniture for our house in earnest. I shall write to you once more, and tell you how we have done it, and after that I shall say good-bye, as perhaps you may like to fit up a doll's house of your own.

JANE MILL.

## ENIGMA.

My first is with the gentle Spring, in garlands gay and bright.
My second comes with rosy morn, but not with evening light;
In leafy glades, in violet dells, my third is plainly seen;
Without my fourth, old England, our loved land had not been;
My fifth is in the pearly shell, with ocean's treasures rare;
And in the glittering diamond mine, my sixth is always there;
My seventh's heard in every home, yet oft must silent be;
My eighth is in the cannons' roar, and shouts of victory;
To fruitful Autumn's changeful hues my ninth a beauty lends;
My tenth brings comfort in our grief, and gives us truest friends;
In sunshine, and in cloudless skies, my eleventh soon is known.
My whole's a prized and welcome gift we gladly call our own.
It cheers us in life's daily cares, it tells of peace and love,
Of purer, fairer joys than earth's, and rest in heaven above.

KATE W.

## BURIED FRUITS.

1. I expected you home long before this.
2. What a mishap! Please don't mention it.
3. Sarah, wipe a chair for your master.
4. Smell this sweet pea, Robert.
5. Madam, so now you are ready.
6. Did Mr. Spring, R.A. persevere in his work?
7. Horatio ran generously to his assistance.
8. If I go, Mary, I will take you and Rose.

A. C.

## BURIED FLOWERS.

1. Arthur Munro sent me this book.
2. If you stop in Keswick I will join you.
3. How stupid A. is! you would hardly believe it.
4. Clean this pan, Sykes, ready for the milk.
5. My dearest Lil, a child might do better.
6. I hope I shall meet you, Clem, at Islington.

A. C.

## EDITORIAL NOTICES.

Canvassing bills and specimen numbers will be sent to any friends who wish to gain us new subscribers.

Letters to the Editor should be addressed to the Rev. DR. WHITTEMORE, 12A, Paternoster Row, London.

# SUNSHINE.

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[CROSSING THE MILL-STREAM.]

## LITTLE ALINE.

A STORY OF GIPSY LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PET'S DIFFICULTIES."

### CHAPTER XXV.—FAMILY PRAYER.

WHEN Faith, at her mother's death, left her London home, and came to live in the country with Margaret and her husband, it seemed a very natural every-day sort of event.

And so it was. There was nothing at all uncommon in an orphan niece being cared for and provided for by her uncle and aunt.

And yet the rich blessings that in God's providence flowed out to others through that simple change it will be impossible for us to tell until our story is finished; and perhaps even then we shall not be able to trace it up in all its windings. One little rill of the waters of life may be turned in so many directions—some seen and some unseen,—that we shall not have time or opportunity to watch their onward course.

Philip and his wife went regularly to church on

Sunday. Whatever the weather might be, their places were seldom vacant, for Philip had a fine voice, and helped to lead the praises of God in the village choir, and Margaret always liked to go everywhere that she could with her husband.

And the day was always observed as a day of rest at the farm. The breakfast was at a later hour than usual, in order that all the necessary work might be done beforehand, and the servants, as well as their master and mistress, be able to attend church, or to visit their friends at home. The dinner was cold, to save all trouble in cooking, but there were extra dainties in both kitchen and parlour, which gave a sort of festivity to the meals. Philip and Margaret would walk round the farm or up one of the hills in the afternoon, in pleasant chat together; and if they spent the evening indoors, Margaret would sing some of the church tunes, while Philip played on his flute.

But there was no quiet reading or study of the Bible, nor any real heartfelt communion with their Father in heaven. They were returning from church one lovely afternoon, and had taken a different direction than usual in order to lengthen their walk. Descending from the churchyard to the valley, they crossed the narrow wooden bridge over the mill-stream, and presently began to ascend a road shaded by fine trees, which curved round the hill, and led them to a beautiful wood, where the squirrels darted from bough to bough, and the little birds sang their sweetest songs.

Philip and Ethel walked first, and Faith and Margaret followed more slowly, for Faith was not very strong yet, and was easily fatigued.

Ethel tripped lightly along by Philip's side, chattering as was her wont. The sermon had been about prayer.

"It was a very fine sermon this morning," said Philip approvingly. "I don't think there is a cleverer preacher in these parts than Mr. Cleveland; but I wish he would not be quite so slow,—it makes me feel sleepy sometimes, and I don't want to feel sleepy in church."

"I never feel sleepy," said Ethel, "I heard every bit of the sermon. Oh, Philip, I want to ask you something."

"Ask me then, dear. What is it?"

"When papa and mamma were at home we used to have prayers every morning."

"Well?" said Philip, waiting for what was coming next, for there certainly was not any question to answer at present.

"Why don't you and Margaret have prayers at the farm?"

"Because we have not time. A busy house like ours, where there is always so much work going on, is very different to a grand mansion like your papa's, where the servants have nothing to do but come when they are called."

"Yes, I know; but wouldn't the work go on better, Philip, if you just took ten minutes, as Mr. *Cleveland said, to* ask God to help and bless you *through the day?*"

"Mr. Cleveland does not understand farm life, Miss Ethel. We could not possibly spare ten minutes in the morning. Patty and Jenny have all the cows to milk, and Margaret is always in the dairy scalding the milk-pans, in readiness for the new milk that is brought in; and not a moment more than is needful is wasted over breakfast, for if I were not to see after things, we should soon go to ruin."

"I don't suppose people in the Bible had farms," said Ethel, thoughtfully. "Yet I am not sure; the rich man Jesus spoke about was a farmer, I should think, because, don't you recollect, he said he had not got room enough, and he should pull down his barns and build bigger ones. He was like you, wasn't he?"

"Like me?" asked Philip.

"Yes. You said to Margaret the other day that you thought you should be obliged to have a new barn at the end of the three-gate field. Why was God angry with that man for building fresh barns?"

"He was not angry with him for that," said Philip; "he blamed him because he thought only of getting rich in this world, and did not lay up treasure in another."

The young farmer's heart smote him as he gave this explanation, for was not this man's history a picture of his own? Was not he eager for wealth and profit, and, at the same time, not the least in earnest about securing the pearl of great price? He tried to lose his uneasy thoughts by pointing out to Ethel a distant hill, on the other side of which was the great sea, which she had never seen. Talking about the sea and all its wonders occupied them till they reached home.

But Edith did not forget that she had not gained her object; and in the evening, as Philip sat smoking his pipe in the arbour, she went out to him with a rose which she had gathered in her hand; and presently she said, "Philip, couldn't you manage to have prayers of an evening when all the work is finished and supper is over?"

Philip was amused at the child's perseverance, and replied, "What would Margaret say, do you think? she is mistress indoors."

"Oh, I have asked Margaret already," was the quick rejoinder, "and she says she is quite willing if you are."

There was no escape now; for Philip knew that if Margaret had a mind for anything, it was sure to be accomplished: besides, memory carried him then many miles away to the home of his childhood, where he had knelt when a little curly-headed fellow by the side of his mother while his father had offered up to God their simple prayers and thanksgivings. He had early left his home, and both parents were long since dead; but softer feelings stole over Philip as he recalled their hallowed teachings, and a wish—a faint, but a real one—that he could tread in their steps was formed at that moment.

"Well, Miss Ethel, I will see what can be

done," he said, cheerfully; and Ethel was satisfied.

When Philip was alone with his wife, he told her what he had promised Ethel, and Margaret smiled, and said, "I do believe you would give that child anything she asked for, Philip. You never seem as if you could say no to her."

"She told me you were willing to have prayers," remonstrated Philip.

"Oh, I said so, because I never thought you would agree to it. Not that I've any objection if you're bent upon doing it," said his wife, pleasantly. She secretly thought that it would perhaps please Mr. Cleveland if he heard of it, and besides, it would be doing as the "gentlefolks" did, and that was always a recommendation to Margaret.

"It can't be amiss to thank God for His goodness to us during the day; we should none of us be any the worse for it," said Philip. "I'm sometimes afraid, Margaret, we are apt to forget where all our mercies come from, and I wouldn't like to be so taken up with this world as quite to forget the next."

Margaret was surprised to hear Philip speak thus gravely, for she was not aware that for some weeks past he had felt dissatisfied with the easy, God-forgetting life which he was leading. Faith's quiet love for her Bible, and Ethel's outspoken desire to teach the poor gipsy girl the way to heaven, had made Philip consider how far he had wandered out of the good paths n which his mother had trained him. The seed then planted in his heart had long lain there unnoticed and useless; but if the soft dew of God's grace fell upon it, and it were warmed by His sunshine, it might yet spring up and bear fruit.

The next time that Philip went to the town he bought a book of family prayers; and one evening soon afterwards, when the large clock in the hall struck nine, Patty and Jenny and Matthew and Harry came into the large kitchen and sat on the long wooden bench while Philip read a chapter reverently out of the Bible. Then all knelt down while he repeated one of the evening prayers out of the book.

It was a small thing to do, the calling that little household together, but it was done from the wish to seek God's blessing; and the promise, "Them that honour Me I will honour," has never yet failed in its fulfilment.

## Chapter XXVI.—The Gipsy Boy at the Farm.

Aline faithfully kept her promise of teaching Ralph all that she was taught at the Farm, and though Ralph, notwithstanding his boasting, was not so sharp at learning as Aline was, yet he made equal progress, because his resolve not to be outdone by a girl spurred him on from day to day to do the very best that he could. He was soon able to master a chapter in the New Testament, and to work out a simple sum. And with his new acquirements came new desires, and plans about his future life. Aline, as usual, was the confidant of his secrets.

"A free life and a merry one, is all very well in the summer time," he said to her, as they were wandering by the river-side, "but the winters are pinching; and I'd rather earn my bread like a man, and know where my next meal was a-coming from."

"If you could save up a bit of money, Ralph, you might hawk things about the country as Scrubby Jack does."

"That's a poor look-out now, Aline; folks won't give nothing like the prices they used to. Its plenty one week and starvation another, and my appetite being uncommon reg'ler, that state of affairs wouldn't suit it."

"What could you do then, Ralph?"

"Why, I've been a-thinking that perhaps Mister Atherton would take me on the Farm."

"Take *you* on, Ralph; You're only joking." Aline could not believe that Ralph really meant what he was saying. It seemed such presumption to imagine that he could be employed, even at harvest-time, on the farm, that she was silent from surprise.

"What should I be a-joking for?" said Ralph, half offended. "There's lots that a handy chap like me could put his hand to; and I shouldn't be above doing anything that was wanted."

"But how would you manage o' nights?" said Aline, seriously; "you'd never bear to be shut up between four walls: it would stifle you."

"They'd let me have some sort of an outhouse, maybe, and then if I left the door and window open, the fresh air of heaven would come in. It won't do to be too particular, you know, if I means to get on."

And that Ralph meant to "get on," was proved by his going boldly up to the farm and asking the "Master" for work.

The open countenance of the lad and his independent air pleased Philip. But the wandering ways of his tribe, and the restless life they led, did not favour the idea of his having acquired those steady and industrious habits that were necessary for farm-labourers. And then what guarantee was there for his honesty?

"I am afraid, my lad, you would never settle down to our sort of life. You have been used to work now and then, but here we are at it from six in the morning till six at night, and some of us longer than that; for it's one of our maxims that if any one will not work, neither shall he eat."

"I'm quite willing to abide by your rules, sir. Just you try me for a week and see, and then if I comes short I'll be off without your telling me, and won't trouble you never no more."

"Well, but what work can you do?"

"I can tend horses, and drive 'em; and I can dig and weed, and do odd jobs of carpentering, and I could mend the cheers and the pots and

pans for the missis, if so be you'd nothing else to se tme to."

"And how about a character? Am I to take what you give me of yourself?"

"You ain't likely to get no other, sir. I hasn't worked for nobody before."

"But you know, my boy—I don't say it unkindly—your people are not always careful to keep exactly to what is their own."

Ralph reddened, but at the same time met Philip's glance fearlessly.

"There's always good and bad everywhere, sir. I don't believe we're any worse than other folks; but, whatever else I may be, I know I'm honest, and if you try me, sir, you shall have no cause to repent of it."

Philip at last agreed to give the boy a week's trial. He was afraid Margaret would object to it, but, on the contrary, she quite approved of the arrangement.

"It's only fair to let the boy have a chance of bettering himself," she said, "and you'll soon find out what he is worth. Put him under Sam Weston, and he'll guide him straight if anybody can."

So Ralph was placed under Sam's care, and told to obey his orders. Sam Weston was the oldest man on the farm, thoroughly upright in all his dealings, and skilful in training young lads for service. His bright face and cheery voice won all new-comers, and though he insisted on work being well done and rightly done, he was so kind and patient that the most blundering were not discouraged.

Ralph liked his master, and strove to do his best; and very proud he was at the end of the week, when Philip paid him the wages which he had fairly earned, and said he was fully satisfied with him.

"We'll make a first-rate farmer of you some of these days," said Philip, smiling, "only you must get civilized enough to live indoors first, you know."

For Ralph's courage had failed in one respect, he could not rest in a bedroom or on a decent bedstead. He made the attempt once to oblige Margaret, but said that he could not close his eyes all night; towards morning he slipped off on to the floor, and then he slept for a bit. So after that a mattress was put for him in the small barn, and he was suffered to indulge his fondness for night breezes to an unlimited extent.

His gipsy friends made great fun of Ralph for his choice of farm life. And when they found that ridicule did not move him, they said he must have some secret trouble which had broken his spirit, and had made him glad to leave his old haunts, and to get away from every one who knew him. Or else was it likely, they argued, that a boy who had been brought up in the freedom which they enjoyed, and who could travel all about the country if he pleased, would be so meek-hearted as to tie himself down to a few yards of land, and, instead *of having his liberty, to* consent to be at *everybody's beck and call?* Some of the elder men, too, taunted Ralph with being so mean-spirited as to go into service; but Aline's uncle and aunt, and a few more like them, said that if the lad felt disposed to earn his bread in that fashion, they would not be the ones to hinder him.

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## Chapter XXVII.—Poor Uncle Tim.

Aline was sorry to lose her old companion and playfellow, for of course she saw but little of him now; but she had such a high opinion of everybody at the farm, that she was pleased Ralph should live there. And she had less spare time than she used to have, for her uncle Tim was very unwell, and suffered so much from rheumatism, that he could not do anything at his trade of chair-mending. His wife, therefore, was obliged to go out instead of him to get orders, and then she had to come home and put in the new canes, for although gipsies are very fond of fresh air, they cannot live only on that. While her aunt was away from the camp, Aline waited on her uncle, mended their clothes, and made the needful preparations for dinner; and sometimes she would run on errands for the other gipsies, who were busy, or mind their children, and in that way get a few pence, which helped in buying the food they wanted.

Poor uncle Tim was really ill, more so than his wife and those around him suspected; for he was very patient, and rarely complained, and his appetite at first did not fail him. But he became gradually worse, and was at length so weak that he could scarcely lift his head from the soft bundle which served for his pillow.

Aline's aunt had but little faith in doctors, and thought a great deal of the herb tea and cooling drinks which she herself made from the plants gathered in the field; and there was no doubt some virtue in them, but Tim's sickness was too serious to be cured by any kind of medicine. His pain lessened, but he wasted away until he became a mere shadow of his former self. He was changed, too, in other ways,—so much more gentle in his temper and in his words, that Aline not only pitied him because he was ill, but she also began to love him, and to like to be with him.

The news of Tim's illness was, of course, carried to Aline's friends at the farm, and Margaret sent him nourishing soups and light puddings, and Philip asked Dr. Butler to go and see him. The doctor went, and gave the poor man such medicines as he considered suitable for him, but he said his disease had made such progress that he was afraid he would never be well again.

When Aline found that her uncle was not likely to recover, the thought whether he was ready to die came into her mind, and she felt very uneasy about him. For Tim, though he had worked hard, and had never stolen anything from his neighbours, had been a swearing, godless man, with almost as little concern about another world as the

unthinking animals that grazed round his tent. When he was well she had not dared to speak to him about the Saviour whom she had learnt to love; and she was half afraid now to mention the subject to him. It might only irritate him, and do him harm instead of good.

But one evening, when he seemed more restless than usual, she said, "Uncle Tim"—she always called him uncle now,—"may be if I were to read to you a few verses it would quiet you, and you would get off to sleep."

He did not answer, so Aline took her little Testament out of her pocket, and turned over its pages.

"What is that book you've got?" he asked.

"The New Testament," said Aline, boldly. "It's the book that's always read to sick folks, and it 'll do you a power of good. You just listen to this here, uncle."

And without waiting for permission, she began reading the fourteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel. "Isn't that nice, uncle?" she said when she had finished it.

"It's very well for them as likes it, child, but it isn't a bit of good to me, and you need not read me any more of it."

"Oh, uncle," said Aline, in a disappointed tone, "I thought it would cheer you up a bit to hear of the many mansions which Jesus is a-preparing for us. Don't you want to go to heaven when you die, uncle?"

"What should I want to go to heaven for?" he said, half angrily.

"Because it's such a beautiful place; you would not have any more pain or trouble there, but you'd be quite happy, and never do nothing wrong; and you'd see Jesus and all the angels in their white dresses a-playing on their golden harps; and you'd walk by the living fountains of waters, and sit down under trees that is always green, and has twelve different fruits a-growing on 'em."

"Don't talk such foolish talk," said Uncle Tim, more gently. "You know very well that I ain't a-going there."

"Why not, uncle?"

"Heaven's for good folks, not for such folks as me. You little know how wicked I've been."

"But it's 'cause we was wicked, uncle, that Jesus came to save us. You haven't any idea how kind He is, and how ready He is to help everybody that goes to Him."

"There, there, Aline, that'll do. I'm not a-going to die a-while, and when my time comes I must do the best I can.

He turned his head the other way and seemed inclined to sleep, so it was not of any use for Aline to say any more then. She went outside the tent, and as she watched the moon rising in the pale sky she asked God in her heart to bless her poor uncle, to wash away all his sins in Christ's blood, and to let him have one of the many mansions in our Father's house above.

# OTTO, THE ORPHAN BOY.

By M. Betham-Edwards.

## Chapter I.—How Otto was found.

It was a lovely spring day. In the bright sunshine the beautiful river Rhine gleamed like a sheet of silver. The hill-sides were clothed with tender green, and the blackcap and the thrush were singing in the copses. Flowers were springing up everywhere, carpeting the turf with bright colours as if by magic, and the little lambs bleated as if they too knew what spring was, and rejoiced in its coming. Joyous as the birds, fresh as the flowers, and sportive as the lambs, were the little Prince Eugene and his sister Gertrude, as they gambolled down a steep mountain path, with their governess, the Countess Bernstein. Lessons were over for that day, and the stately yet pleasant castle overlooking the sunny Rhineland they had left but a quarter of an hour ago seemed almost a prison when the first cuckoo could be heard, and the lady's-smocks silvered the meadows. Yes, there was no doubt that play was better than work on a bright March day.

Little Princess Gertrude was seven years old, and consequently looked upon her brother, who was her elder by three years, as a great authority indeed. She had fair hair braided into a long pigtail, blue eyes, cheeks round and rosy as an apple, and she was dressed in a little grey pelisse, rather long and scanty, after the fashion of those days, and a Tyrolean hat with a broad brim and tapering crown, looking as quaint a little princess as if she had just walked out of fairy-land, though in fact she was a very matter-of-fact and practical little personage indeed, and by no means like a fairy. Little Prince Eugene looked quaint too in his top-boots, little grey coat braided with green, and tall hat trimmed with peacocks' feathers; but he was no more romantic than his sister, for the story I am telling you is a story of real life of to-day, and not of far-off times in fanciful places. The little Prince and Princess who lived in the stately castle overlooking Rhineland were children like yourselves, with schoolrooms, slates and pencils, and story-book, and it must be added with occasional little troubles and sulkinesses too. But to-day all was serenity and joy, and as they skipped along, their merry laughter was heard by the far-off woodman on the hills and the bargemen as they made slowly a way along the bright blue river.

By and by they had passed out of the lights and shadows of the woods into a broad smooth path winding by the river side. The broad-leaved yellow flags were out, gleaming like gold amid the rushes; here and there bright patches of marsh-marigold illuminated the meadows, whilst the heron and the stork flew overhead, and a thousand birds were singing close by. How joyful the spring

made everything! Even the meek-eyed daisies seemed to say, "Spring is here! spring is here!" That river path was the children's favourite walk, for its banks were an enchantment always. There in summer-time they found water-lilies and purple lychnis, meadowsweet and willow-herb; there they watched the gambols of the water-rat, and the movements of the statelier dabchick with her young; there they found lovely little mussel-shells and mosses, and butterflies and dragon-flies; and there from May till October they could see the steamers glide by, bearing delighted travellers from all parts through their beautiful Rhineland. But crowning delight of all was it to be themselves on the river they loved so well, and to sail as they often did past the grand old ruins or stately towns on its banks; past vineyards, and gardens, and orchards, rosy with ripening fruit. They would go on glowing midsummer days, starting early and not returning till twilight. The Rhine was their playground, their fairy-land, their story-book, and they knew its pages almost by heart.

"What shall we find to-day, do you think, Eugene?" asked Gertrude, as she plucked treasure after treasure and placed it in her little basket. "Do you remember the poor little linnet with a broken wing we found and carried home last year?"

"One can never tell," answered Eugene, shaking his head wisely; "a wild swan next, perhaps. Who knows?"

"Do let us look very closely," Gertrude cried, as the two, hand in hand, peered hither and thither among the rushes.

All on a sudden they dropped their baskets and ran back to the Countess, in a mingled ecstasy of joy and wonderment.

"Oh! Madame, Madame," was all they could say, and catching hold of her hands, they led her to the spot, both flushed and trembling with excitement.

The countess, who was a very gentle, rather timid lady, inclined to start at the sight of anything unexpected, and to be a little overcome with the children's out-of-door enthusiasm, allowed herself to be dragged forward under protest. She was always a little uneasy lest Gertrude, who could not of course wear top-boots like a boy, might get wet feet upon these occasions, and began a mild remonstrance. But no sooner had she reached the spot indicated than she too suddenly flushed and trembled, and turned from one child to the other without a word to say. For lo! there, like Moses hidden in the bulrushes, fresh as a rose, and sleeping sweetly as if he were himself a happy little Prince of Rhineland, lay a beautiful little child about six months old.

The countess, who many and many a year ago had lost a baby boy, and for his sweet sake loved every other, clasped her hands, and tears streamed down her cheeks.

"*The poor, little forsaken* thing," she cried, *bending over it with motherly* tenderness. "The sweet, helpless mite! Oh! who could have the heartlessness to abandon it?"

"But, madame," said Gertrude, in her practical, business-like way, and yet very soothingly, for she could not bear to see her kind friend thus troubled, "what harm will it take? We can carry it home and feed it, and play with it, and it will be as happy as possible."

"Come along, baby dear!" cried little Prince Eugene, stooping down to lift the child out of its little wooden cradle.

"Stay, Prince Eugene," said the countess. "We cannot leave the little love to perish, of course; but the princess, your mother, might be displeased with me for allowing you to take it. It may have a fever."

"Oh!" cried Eugene, with a loud laugh. "Why, he looks as strong and as well as possible; and am I afraid of fevers, do you think?"

The loud laugh woke up the child, who smiled, looked from one to the other, and held out his little hands, asking as plainly as he could to be taken up. Again Eugene entreated, but the countess was firm, and seing one of the royal dairy women approach, to her entrusted the baby. There was no more attraction, however, on the river-banks that day; and the three returned with the woman and her little charge to the castle.

"Will mamma let us keep it as our very own?" asked Gertrude, eagerly. "I could dress it out of my pocket money and give it half my breakfast and dinner."

"And I would teach it to fish, and ride, and swim," Eugene said; "and when he is grown up I would make a soldier of him."

"There is time enough to talk of that," answered the countess, smiling. "But is he not a beautiful child?" she added, turning to the woman.

"Indeed he is," she said, "and though I have seven of my own, and, God knows, nothing to spare, I'd willingly keep him myself, the pretty lamb."

"If mamma gives him to me I shall call him Rudolph, after Rudolph of Hapsburg," said Eugene.

"And if mamma gives him to me I shall call him Moritz, after Moritz of Saxony," put in Gertrude.

"Do not be in too great a hurry to settle that point. Who knows but that he may have a name already?" said the countess, and true enough, at that very moment, as the child crowed and danced in the peasant-woman's arms, he displayed a name, worked in large red letters, and it was Otto.

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## CHAPTER II.—HOW OTTO WAS PROVIDED FOR.

THE discovery was a disappointment, and yet settled many difficulties, for when there is no reason why one name should be chosen more than another, how difficult it is to select amongst so many. But the crowning excitement and suspense were yet to come. What would the Princess,

their mother say? What if she should decide to have the child put out to nurse and there end the matter? As they approached the castle the spirits of both Eugene and Gertrude fell. They knew that their mother would do her best to please them, but she could not of course always grant their wishes, and this they felt to be a most perplexing and unexpected one.

The princess, a grave, stately, pious lady, whose time was principally devoted to charitable works among the poor, heard the story from beginning to end, and taking the child in her arms said,—

"Do you really wish to adopt this little one, Eugene and Gertrude?"

"Yes, yes, mamma," cried both the children in a breath; and encouraged by the princess's kind looks, they pressed close and kissed the baby on their knees a dozen times.

"But, dear children, have you considered what a serious thing it is to take charge of a little human being?" continued the princess. "It is not like a bird or a kitten, that only requires to be fed well and kept warm. This child must be taught to serve God and love his fellow-men, and to do his duty."

"I will teach him his letters," said Gertrude, timidly, with tears in her eyes. She began to see new difficulties.

"And I will teach him to fight big boys," put in Eugene.

"Ah!" said the princess, "you do not quite know what it is you undertake. We have found this sweet little helpless thing, and it is our duty to provide food and shelter for him; but if we take him to our hearths we must give him more than these—love, I mean. Would it not be wiser to let good Bäbele yonder take him?"

"And sure enough, your royal highness, he should never get a cross word or a blow in my poor house," said the good woman, crying. "The first of my children who should lift up his hand against that innocent mite should turn out, neck and crop."

"Peace, good Bäbelle," said the countess, reprovingly.

"The honest soul is right," interposed the princess, "and I am sure our little foundling would be well off under her care. But listen, Eugene and Gertrude. What sacrifices are you prepared to make for him, provided I let him stay? Will you each give him a third of your pocket-money? will you each give him a third portion of your toys? will you promise to share all your pleasures with him—to look after him if he is ill—to regard him, in fact, rather as a little prince and a foster-brother than a stranger and a foundling? If you promise to do this he shall stay here, and I will have a nurse provided for him."

"Heaven bless your Royal Highness! You are a Christian lady indeed," blubbered Bäbele in the corner, whilst Eugene and Gertrude threw their arms round their mother's neck and, with a dozen kisses, gave the promise she required. So little Otto, who an hour or two ago lay friendless and forlorn in his humble wooden cradle, as much in danger of perishing as some little fledgling that has broken its wing far from the parent nest, was made welcome in the great house. Clothes were procured for him, and a warm little cot, and a kindly-faced nurse; and so much at home did he look a few hours after arriving at his new abode, that you might have supposed he had never known any other.

## BURIED BOYS' AND GIRLS' NAMES.

1. On the box was marked W in large letters.
2. Tell her, if she lends me the book, I will not keep it long.
3. It is either a birch or a cedar tree.
4. Remember that you come home early to-morrow.
5. Address the letter, Mr. Reed, gardener and florist.
6. If you like asparagus, take some.
7. The man, after unloading the cart, hurried back to tell us the good news.
8. He did all that I told him.
9. You do not know how altered your brother looks.
10. If you ask him, he will, I am sure, do it.
11. Nelson was one of England's greatest heroes.
12. Your friends arrived there safely after a very rough voyage.
13. I found last night in the cab a silver bracelet.
14. Much as I should have wished it, her cousin cannot come.

MEYNELLA W.

*Charlton, Kent.*

## THE LOAF OF BREAD.

SOLUTION OF THE NINETY-FIRST PICTURE STORY.

It is Sunday afternoon, and the bells of St. Peter's Church are already calling the worshippers together. Three little girls are going in at the porch door; but it is only of the foremost that my story has to deal.

Quietly Jessie Gordon (for that is her name) takes her usual seat in the gallery near the pulpit, and patiently waits for the service to commence. At length, after the prayers are over, Mr. Raymond, the clergyman, ascends the pulpit, and preaches on the text, "Freely ye have received, freely give." In the course of his sermon he tells his congregation of a poor family, the father of which has just died after a protracted illness, the mother herself seriously ill, and five children, all of which are of too tender an age to help their mother. He earnestly asks the congregation to help them, and thus to follow the apostle's command, "Freely ye have received, freely give."

The next day, Jessie going to Mr. Raymond's house carrying a large loaf of bread in her hands, and standing on tiptoe, rings the bell.

She is taken into his study, and sits down on a footstool at his feet, with a hand resting on his knee. She gives him the loaf, saying it is for the poor family he mentioned in his sermon. They talk for some time, but at last Jessie departs, followed by his blessing.

Many weeks pass away before we see Jessie again, and this time she is in a darkened room, stretched on a bed of pain. More than once a day the doctor's brougham stops at her home, and he leaves her mother in tears when he shakes his head so gravely, and looks so doubtful as she repeats her often asked inquiry, "Will dear Jessie recover?" Jessie expresses a desire to see Mr. Raymond, and a servant is instantly despatched to bring him.

She rings the same bell that Jessie rang on that Monday morning so many weeks ago, and gives her message to Mr. Raymond.

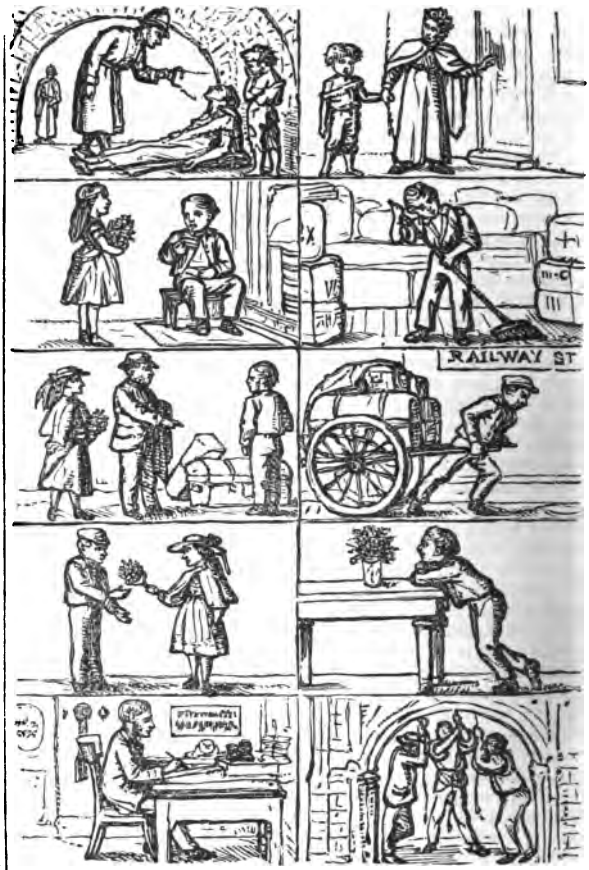
With a sad heart he goes to Jessie's home, and when he sees her —what, can that thin, pale child be that rosy, healthy one who brought a loaf of bread to him for the starving family? Yes, it is she, for a joyful smile lights up her wan face as she recognises him, and she feebly murmurs, "I am so glad you have come." He takes her hand—how thin and white!—and presses it warmly. After reading and praying with her, he leaves, promising to come and see her every day.

Two weeks after, in spite of the doctor's doubts, Jessie is able to leave her bed. How pleasant it is to sit in a large arm-chair propped up by pillows, watching the passers by! Yes, and there is the maid bringing in her dinner, made by the hands of her loving mother. We hope Jessie will enjoy her meal.

Years pass away. Jessie has grown into a woman, and Mr. Raymond is also changed. But the friendship which began through the loaf of bread has never ceased, and now Wilfred Raymond and Jessie Gordon are husband and wife. They are spending their honeymoon at a seaside village in the Isle of Wight, and as they walk arm-in-arm along the beach, watching a vessel, they are both thinking of that day when their friendship began through "a loaf of bread."

*MARIAN A. (14).*

*Brighton.*




## PICTURE STORY.

### No. XCIII.

HONOURABLE MENTION.—Amy M. B., Alice P. H., Mey nella W., Rénée B., Wilhelmina C., Florence D. S., Anne H C., Fanny A., Jessie A. D., Lucille L., Annie E. W., Catherine W. H. J., Posy, Primrose, Lilian M. M., Julia F., Lily M. W., Mary Jane G., Annie E. C., Lucy E. R., Eleanor and Lilian S., Kathleen O. U., Edith G. H., Elizabeth A. G., Alice P., Eleanor J. S., Blue Stripes, Bertha J., Gertrude S., Ida C., Charlotte A., Emily M. F., Ellen F. R., Alice M. J., Emily M. B., Fanny M. T., Katherine L. S., Ada G., Florrie M. U. F., Mabel J. E. R., Bertha C. M. S., Georgina F. D., Emmie E. G., Edith A. S., Alice M. B., Edith B. S., Annie P.; Frank L. P., Arthur T. V. B., Frederick T., Robert C.

The Rules were given in the January magazine, and must be strictly complied with. The solutions should be posted not later than the 8th of this month, addressed to the Rev. Dr. Whittemore, 12A, Paternoster Row, London. We are always glad to receive accounts of our dear friends' success in canvassing for new subscribers.

EDITOR.

[GOING TO THE RESCUE.]

## AUNT MILLICENT'S CHARGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SOLDIER HAROLD," &C.

### CHAPTER XVIII.—ROSE'S TRUST.

LITTLE Rose Eldridge was left at home as her father's housekeeper. Mrs. Eldridge had been obliged to set off in a hurry, owing to her mother's sudden illness. The old woman had no other daughter, so Mrs. Eldridge had to go and nurse her; she had taken little baby Bob with her, leaving Annie, and Jennie, and her father, and Dick, and the house generally in Rose's charge; and very proud Rose was of the trust reposed in her. Of course she could not go to school, there was plenty to do without that; but she managed very well with the help and advice of a kind neighbour now *and then.*

*Mother had been gone three days,* and Rose had been very busy all day. It was evening now, and she was preparing supper, very glad that resting-time had come. All was ready at last; and Rose threw herself into a chair to wait for her father, while Annie and Jennie ran down the lane to meet him.

Rose thought him rather long in coming, but he appeared at length, slowly and quietly, not with the children dancing and running round him as usual: the little girls had each hold of a hand, and were walking steadily beside him.

Rose sprang to the door.

"Oh, father, are you very tired? is anything the matter, father?" she added, as she noticed the downcast look on his face.

"Never mind just now, little lass; let us have our supper."

Silently Rose placed the meal on the table, and almost as silently it was eaten. And then John Eldridge rose and went out into the little garden

to smoke his pipe, and Rose took the young ones to bed, wondering very much if anything was the matter with father.

She stood a minute by the lattice window, after she had given Annie and Jennie their good night kiss, thinking, and not thinking only; a swift cry winged its way upward, that if there was any trouble, she might be a comfort to father, as mother would have been had she been at home.

And it seemed as if some comfort would be needed; for when Rose went down again into the kitchen John Eldridge was sitting by the table under the window, with his arms crossed upon it and his head buried in them. He did not move nor speak when Rose put her arms lightly round his neck and kissed him.

Rose was certain now that there was something the matter, and her thoughts immediately flew to Lydia. Somehow Lydia was often in her mind, for she knew how much her mother had been against her going to the place at Low Marston, and that she had never approved of her great intimacy with Ellen Firbank. She waited and waited for her father to speak, until she could bear the suspense no longer; so at last she ventured to ask once more what was the matter.

John Eldridge raised his head then, looking a little bewildered.

"Eh, lassie! are you there? I had forgotten you. Why, dear," he added, stroking her head as it rested against him, "I think you had better not know until mother comes back. Poor mother! it will be a terrible blow for her."

The last words were spoken as if to himself, with a deep-drawn sigh.

"Oh, but, father," exclaimed Rose, eagerly and excitedly, "I can't wait till mother comes back, please! Besides, you know she said I was to be the little mother while she was away."

"Ay, so she did;" and a half-smile broke over his face, lighting up its sadness a little. "But I don't see that you can do any good in this, Rose,—or mother either, for the matter of that."

"Is it—is it anything about Lydia, father?"

The question was put fearfully, anxiously; and Rose gave a great sigh of relief when the answer came.

"No, why should it? Lydia is all right, for anything I know. But I see I might as well tell you, for you won't be easy till I do. Rose, what would you say if you had to leave this home—if we all had, I mean; to go away, and never live here any more?"

Rose stood and stared.

What, leave this dear, beautiful little cottage, where they were all born! their very own, and that so many of their neighbours envied them the possession of. It could not be; it was quite impossible! Father must be joking.

"I think I should die," she said at last, in a *low tone.* "*I could not bear to live anywhere else in Rothwell than here.*"

"*Nor I, Rose. If we do go, it will be far enough away from Rothwell, and everything connected with it, I can tell you.*"

"Oh, father, it can't be! You could never find it in your heart to go away and leave this dear little garden, and this beautiful view of the bay. There can't be any other place in the world so lovely as this is. Have you sold it, father?"

"No. It seems it is not mine either to sell or to keep; but I did not know it until to-day. Squire Gascoigne, he came and says to me this very night, quite easy and natural like—'Eldridge,' he says, 'we have been cutting down some of the trees in the park to open out the sea view, and I find that cottage of yours comes right in the way in one direction, so we must have it down. It had no business to be there at all, it is quite an unsightly object; however, it shall not stand much longer. You must try and find yourself another home by the end of a month.' I stood staring in astonishment, just as you did now, Rose; but I managed to get out after a bit that it was mine, and that the old squire had never said aught against it. 'Did he give you permission—give you the land in writing, or anything of that kind?' he asked, in a quiet sort of way. And I could not rightly say that he had. 'Very well,' he said, 'then all else goes for nothing. I am not such an easy man as my predecessor.' 'But I built it on a bit of waste land that nobody wanted,' I ventured to say. 'That waste land belongs to me, and I want it; so see that you are out of that cottage in a month; it's a wretched place, and quite spoils the village.'"

"Oh, father," exclaimed Rose, indignantly, "why, it's just beautiful! there couldn't be a lovelier place in the world than our dear home."

"Not to us, Rose. And I do think I would almost as lieve part with my right hand as with it. But the squire doesn't understand: it spoils *his* home, or he thinks it does, so we must give way."

"Then can nothing be done, father?" questioned Rose, sadly.

"No, it seems not. I would resist him to my last penny if it would be any use. But I met Mr. Grey just now, and he says that we cannot claim this poor bit of land and this little cottage unless we have had it twenty years; and it is only eighteen this August since mother and I came and settled down here, as happy as could be. So the law gives it to Squire Gascoigne, and he says that we are to turn out."

And John Eldridge's head went down again on the table, and a deep sigh burst from him.

Rose was silent. The trouble seemed too great and too real for her to do or say anything in it.

But all at once there came into her mind her first Sunday afternoon with Miss Grey, the collect they had learnt, and their kind teacher's few words of explanation upon it. Surely the "God whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth," would help them in this sorrow and difficulty. He was never failing, therefore they might go to Him for everything.

Miss Grey had said so; and this must be one of the hurtful things from which they might ask to be kept. And even as she was thinking, there flashed across her mind an idea which looked as if it might possibly open out a way of escape.

It made Rose look up brightly, and speak in a cheerful tone.

"Dear father, perhaps we shall be let stay after all. I mean to tell Miss Ida all about it. She is such a nice young lady, and she often comes here with Miss Grey. And I can talk to her, for she won't frighten me as the squire would, and then you know, father, she can tell her papa. And I am sure when he knows how much we love our home, and how sorry we should be to leave it, he will never think of turning us out. And so the trouble will be all over and done with before mother comes back."

John Eldridge raised his head, and there was a half-smile on his face, caused by the child's simple idea.

"Miss Ida and you might think so, Rosie, but I doubt whether either of you would have much influence with the squire. No, we shall have to go; there is no help for it."

"Oh, but father dear, I think there will be. The good God up in heaven will not let us go away, you'll see. Or if He does, it will be to some better place. He will guide us. Don't you remember that verse in the Psalms?—'He led them by a right way to a city of habitation.' Miss Grey says God's way is always the right way, so I am sure it will be now. But I shall ask Him to keep us here if it isn't hurtful for us. Won't you ask Him too, father?"

"It would be but little use," muttered John Eldridge; but it was said to himself, and Rose did not catch the words. He put his arms round the child, and kissed her.

"Keep your simple faith, little one. God grant it may be as you say."

The trouble did not weigh upon Rose's spirits, though she thought much of it; for she had carried it to her heavenly Father's feet and left it there for Him to take care of.

She took the first opportunity of telling it to Ida, however. Ida listened and sympathized, and was very sorry, but was afraid she could do nothing. Papa was making a great many improvements, and wanted to have the place nice; but she would mention it to him.

But Ida forgot all about it until two or three days afterwards, when she happened to be near the cottage when out with Basil. So she told him, and he advised her to say nothing. It was an unsightly place, he said, and ought never to have been built; and the sooner it was pulled down the better. The people could easily find another home.

So Rose's attempt came to nothing. If help came at all, it must come from some other quarter.

But the "Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is His ear heavy, that it cannot hear." He never does fail those who trust in Him, and little Rose's faith and trust are sure to be rewarded in some way.

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## Chapter XIX.—Out on the Ocean.

It was Saturday afternoon, a pleasant afternoon in autumn. Arnold had long got over his trouble about the pencil-case; his retirement in his own room had been of use to him. Mr. Grey was pleased with his real sorrow and repentance, and quite forgave him; so it was all a thing of the past now—only to be remembered by making him more careful and humble for the future.

The three boys—for Johnnie was doing up his little garden on his own account—were sauntering up and down with nothing to do apparently, or at least nothing sufficiently inviting and entertaining to be worth the trouble of doing.

"I say, this is awfully slow work," said Ernest, with a noisy prolonged yawn; "I wish we could find something to amuse ourselves. Come, Basil, are all your ideas dried up? you are generally ready to invent something fresh."

"Can't think of anything just now," said Basil, in a lazy tone, throwing himself full length on the grass and pulling his hat over his eyes as if he were going to sleep. But in a minute afterwards he started up.

"I have it! just the very thing! Arnold has never been on the sea yet: let's go down to the bay and see if we can't find a boat; it is the very afternoon for a jolly row."

"You've hit it this time, Basil, and no mistake!" exclaimed Ernest, all life and energy at once; "it will be just splendid! I wonder we never thought of it before."

"But are you sure we may go?" put in Arnold, not relishing the idea quite so much as his companions: it was an untried expedition to him, and he would have been rather glad of an excuse not to go.

"Of course we may," said Ernest; "papa never objects to us going on the sea, if only we have one of the boatmen with us. And I am sure you will like it, Arnold; the only wonder is that you have not been yet."

"Should not we fetch the girls—Ida and Agatha? they would enjoy it too," said Basil.

But the proposal was at once put down by Ernest.

"No, no, we won't have the girls; they will only turn frightened if the least bit of wind gets up. And Johnnie is better where he is. Come along; don't let us waste any more time talking here."

The three boys soon ran down to the shore; Arnold, it must be owned, feeling rather nervous over the coming expedition, though he was glad to know there was no intention of their going alone.

The sea looked calm and pleasant, and the soft splash of the waves on the sand sounded very

inviting. John Eldridge was busy at the little landing-place, doing something at his boat. Basil at once went up to him.

"Good afternoon, Eldridge; I am glad to find you here. We want to go out on the sea: will you take us in your boat? You did once before, some time ago, you know."

The man straightened himself up, looked round, east, west, north, and south, before he answered; and then he touched his hat respectfully but coldly.

"Not to-day, Master Gascoigne; it is not fit. No one goes out in my boat to-day."

"Not fit!" exclaimed Basil, while Ernest burst into a loud laugh of disbelief: "why, it is a beautiful day, Eldridge; just the very weather for a row."

"I suppose I know my own business best," said Eldridge, a little stiffly. "The weather may be all right for land folks, but it isn't for the sea. There 'll be a storm come on before nightfall yet."

"Oh, Eldridge, what nonsense! there isn't the least bit of a sign of a storm anywhere. You only say that to frighten us."

"My eyes see signs where yours don't, and I am not often mistaken: the wind is very treacherous at this time of the year. Very sorry to disappoint you, young gentlemen, but my boat does not stir from this here landing this day with my consent and knowledge."

So saying, and again touching his hat, John Eldridge walked away as if the matter were settled as far as he was concerned.

The boys looked at each other a little blankly; they were very sorry to lose their afternoon's pleasure, but they dare not venture—after Mr. Gascoigne's expressed wish— to go alone.

As soon as his father had got to a safe distance out of hearing and seeing, Dick Eldridge peered out of the shadow of a jutting piece of rock, and came towards the group of disappointed boys.

"Beg pardon, Master Basil, but you were wanting to go on the sea."

"Yes, indeed we do," was the eager answer; "Oh, Dick, can you take us?"

"I both can and will, if you care to go."

"But Eldridge said a storm was coming on," put in Arnold, shrinking back.

Dick smiled.

"Oh, I reckon that was a little bit of excuse on father's part, for he didn't want to go, so he had a storm handy, don't you see? The fact is," he went on, drawing near to Basil's elbow, and speaking in a confidential tone, "father's considerably put out about this affair of our cottage: that is why he wouldn't go."

"What affair?" asked Basil.

"Oh, don't you know, sir? Squire Gascoigne is going to pull down our bit of a place, and father *thinks he* has no right to, for it belongs to him; *and he is real vexed about it.* I never saw him *so angry as he was; so it is* not likely he would do anything to please you, don't you see, Master Basil?"

"Ida told me something about it," said Basil, thoughtfully. "Well, Dick," he went on after a minute, "if you will take us out this afternoon I will try and persuade papa to leave your cottage alone, so that's a bargain."

"Oh, I'll do it without that, sir; I shall be glad to. I don't care about it; one house is as good as another to me."

John Eldridge was nowhere in sight, so Dick quickly unmoored the boat, not caring that his father had expressly forbidden it to be used. The three boys got into it without any hesitation.

"Can't we have a sail?" suggested Ernest; "there seems to be quite enough wind to fill it, and it will be a great deal easier work than rowing."

"Provided we can manage it," put in Basil.

"Oh, I can readily do that, sir," was Dick's confident answer, and the sail was accordingly hoisted, for no one heard or heeded Arnold's faint remonstrance of "No, no, do let us row."

The little boat went merrily before the wind, and much talking and laughing prevailed. Dick Eldridge was no restraint on the boys' amusement, he rather contributed to it in no small degree by his talks of old ocean and the sights he had seen when out with his father. Arnold enjoyed it; it was much pleasanter than he expected, skimming the water so quickly and quietly.

The boys had not intended to go far out of the little bay of Rothwell; but the wind was blowing steadily from the land, and it carried them much further out to sea than they had any idea of. At last Basil, the most thoughtful of the lot, made a sudden break in the merry talk.

"I say, Dick, isn't it time we were going back? we must be home by tea, you know."

Dick looked behind them the way they had come but there was no sign of land there or anywhere. They were out in the wide ocean without anything to guide them. They stared into each other's faces with dismay. Dick would not show that he was afraid, or had lost confidence in himself, and when Arnold clung to his arm and exclaimed,—

"Oh, Dick, do take us back again!"

"Ay, ay, Master Grey," he answered cheerily, "don't you be feared. We will be home again in a jiffy."

But the going home again was not so easy a thing as they imagined.

Dick thought he knew the right direction, for the wind blew straight from shore; but then there was such a thing as the wind changing—not an unlikely thing by any means; so, though he turned the boat round in a contrary direction, he could not feel certain that they were right.

And they soon found that going against the wind and tide was a very different thing from going with it. The boat began to toss about in a way that was anything but pleasant, especially to Arnold;

and Dick had the greatest difficulty in managing the sail. The wind, too, which had been but a slight breeze when they started, had increased greatly, and there seemed every probability that the storm Eldridge had foretold would be upon them before many hours had passed.

They could not tell how far they were from home; but Dick, who knew that they had come at a good rate before the wind, judged that they must be three or four miles. The boat soon grew perfectly unmanageable, swaying from side to side till the sail dipped into the water. So with infinite trouble, Dick, with the help of Basil's strong arm, took it down, and they tried what they could do with the oars, a pair of which he had brought.

They got on a little better now, though Arnold was of no use; he was too ill to do anything but lie at the bottom of the boat, and wish they had never come. And, if the truth was known, more of them wished the same.

Dick was very sorry now that he had disobeyed his father, for though John Eldridge had not spoken to him—had not known that he was within hearing,—still he had been disobedient all the same; but when young folks think they know better than their elders, they generally get into trouble. There was no other boat out: wiser heads than theirs had seen the storm coming, and were safely moored in the harbour. So they were alone, an angry sky above them, and a still angrier sea around them, and the wind was every minute growing louder and louder, and lashing the waves into greater fury.

It was not dark yet, but the sun was near setting, and big black clouds hid it from view, and Dick knew that long before they could reach the shore night would have set in, and their troubles would be increased tenfold. He and Basil rowed with all their strength, while Ernest guided the helm as well as he was able. The tide was running very strong, and Dick knew that they were drifting far higher up than Rothwell; but only let them reach the shore anywhere, and they would be in smoother water under the cliffs.

But few words were spoken. All knew and felt their danger. Once Basil rested for half a minute on his oar, and his clear tones were heard above the raging of the storm, as he clasped his hands and looked upwards:—

"O Father in heaven, take care of us, and bring us safely home."

There was no time for more; but it was a swift cry for help where alone it could be of any avail.

Then Arnold sat up and began to speak of that time so long ago when there was a storm on the Sea of Galilee, when Jesus arose and rebuked the wind and the waves with His gentle "Peace, be still," and how immediately He was obeyed.

"I wish He were here now," said Ernest.

"He is!" was the eager answer, "just as much as He was with the disciples then; and we can say to Him as they did, 'Master, save, or we perish!'"

There was silence in the little company; but each heart was happier for the thought that there was One, an almighty One, amongst them, who knew their condition and their distress.

Meanwhile Eldridge was somewhat uneasy. He had gone home, but he could not settle there. Basil and his companions were much on his mind. True, Squire Gascoigne had treated him very badly, and his anger was very strong against him; but that was no reason why he should knowingly let the boys run into danger. For that Basil was determined to go he had very little doubt: not that he ever supposed they would take his boat after what he had said; but he thought they would easily persuade some other of the fishermen to go with them; and that it was not safe nor fitting they should go was quite certain.

So in less than an hour he was down at the shore again, exceedingly dismayed and annoyed to find that his boat had disappeared. The other boats lay high and dry upon the sand, and their owners were some of them sitting leisurely under the cliffs, talking of the storm that was rising; but of his own boat he could not catch a glimpse.

"Why, Eldridge," said one old man, "the lad Dick and some more young fellows took it out nigh an hour agone. I thought you could not know about it, or you would never have let them go such weather as we are like to have; but it was none of my business."

"They'll never live in yonder sea," said another man, smoking his pipe, and gazing out on the angry waters.

And indeed there seemed but small chance of it. What he could do Eldridge did not know; but he felt as if he must do something. He mounted to the top of the cliffs with his glass in his hand, and through it he thought he could make out in the far distance a boat struggling with the waves, but he could not be at all certain.

The nearest life-boat was five miles off, so there was no chance of obtaining that. However, Eldridge determined to do what he could. He went back to the landing-place, and began to draw one of the boats down to the water's edge.

"What are you going to do, Eldridge?" asked the old weather-beaten fisherman, Sheldon, who had spoken before.

"I am going after those lads," he said, with a stern look on his face.

"Not single-handed? It's a foolhardy business altogether; but if you, with your wife and young ones, will risk your life, I'll go too; mine is worth nothing to nobody, but to my old woman," he added, with a sort of catching sob.

"No, Sheldon," said Eldridge, firmly, "I'll not take you. And it's not my lad I think about so much as the squire's boys and Master Grey. Dick can swim, but those other poor fellows will be very helpless in a sea like this."

"I'll go with you, Eldridge!" exclaimed a strong young man, springing up.

"That's right, Martin," was Eldridge's answer,

as he grasped the young man's hand with a hearty shake; "by God's help you and I will save them."

They got into the boat, with ropes and life-belts, and anything else they could think of, the men on the shore watching them with intense interest and wishing them God-speed.

## HOW WE FURNISHED OUR DOLL'S HOUSE.

### CHAPTER VI.—WHAT WE PUT IN IT.

OUR doll's house has come home. Mr. Green, the carpenter, has finished it even to the staircase, and the bannisters, and the tiny steel grates for fireplaces, and the mantelpieces; and everything is as perfect as though it were a real house for live people to live in. It is a very large house, the size of a big chest of drawers, and we feel as though we could almost walk into it ourselves, only we should want it all made into one room, instead of into twelve as it is now divided.

Yesterday auntie took us all to select the dolls who are to live in our new house. It was a great piece of work choosing them. Willie wanted the girl dolls to have golden hair and the boy dolls to have black; but I didn't care for that, and I said so. I like boys to have golden hair as well as girls, and I like some girls to have brown hair and black, not all alike, so I wouldn't have all the dolls that Willie picked out; and Gerty took a very funny idea into her head, and would have a black doll.

I said that would never do; for of course one couldn't have either the papa or the little boy black, but auntie said we could have a black servant, so Gerty's choice was taken, and he is to be dressed up in very bright, staring colours, as a contrast, you know, to his dark complexion.

Then auntie said that neither Willie nor I could quite have our own way, but must yield a little to each other; so Willie chose the mamma and papa doll, and I the young lady that was to be like auntie, and the little boy and the baby dolls; and auntie selected the dolls that were to be the nurse and cook and housemaid, so that, with the black servant, we had nine in all to live in our new doll's house. Of course the clothes have all to be made for them, and I can tell you that the number of clothes nine dolls require is something wonderful, even if they only have one suit each—and they really ought to have two at the very least. I may tell you more about the dolls' dresses later on, but now I must say something about the house.

All the rooms in the house had been papered just like the rooms in our house. The drawing-room had a white and gold paper on it, the dining-*room a red one, and the* bedrooms were papered *with white and little sprays* of roses running about all over it, while the walls of the hall and staircase were painted a pale tint of green.

As there was nothing needed for the walls or ceilings, except to make pictures for them, auntie said the first thing to be done was to make carpets for all the rooms and staircases; so she took the measure and shape of each room, and cut them out with small strips upon them, such as I told you about in our paper weaving, and then she gave each of us the ones that she wished us to work.

Gerty was to weave the carpets for the kitchens and some of the bedrooms, because taking up one strip on the wooden needle and going over the next would be pattern enough for them, and Willie and I had the dining-room and drawing-room and best bedroom carpets to weave, because there were to be some pretty patterns in them, and auntie said she would make the staircase carpets herself, because they would have to be very narrow, and she thought she would make them, not as we did the mats, but with doubled paper and without a frame, as she made book-marks. I watched her make it, and I think I can tell you how it is done.

She had four long strips of paper doubled, long enough for one flight of stairs, and she had also a number of much shorter strips of another colour, doubled too. She took one of the short strips in her right hand, and put one of the four long ones inside it, *between* the two ends, and the open ends of the long strip just stood up a little. Then she placed another of the four long ones next its closed end, *over* the short strip; after that she took a third long one and put it between the short one, like the first, and the fourth long one she put *over* the short one, like the second, and this she called the first row, though it just looked as though it would all of it come to pieces.

For the second row auntie had another short piece doubled, and passed the fourth doubled long strip between it; she pushed it between the third long strip, then she clasped the second one on each side and slipped the two ends through the first. It was getting firmer now, and when auntie put in the third short strip, that went exactly like the first; it was quite as firm as the mats, and was double, and had both sides alike, which was an advantage.

So auntie worked on at her stair carpets, and Willie and Gerty and I wove our carpets for the rooms, and when they were done we fastened them down in their places, and the house really looked half furnished to begin with.

The next to be made, auntie said, were blinds and curtains; and here our paper-cutting helped and we made beautiful long pink curtains, with white ones inside them for the drawing-room, and red and white for the dining-room, and white and blue ones for the bedrooms, till all the windows looked quite lovely, and of course they had all blinds, and looked like a properly furnished house on the outside.

Then auntie said she thought the next thing

would be to make the chairs and tables and couches and furniture for the house, and she said of course they must all be suitable for the rooms; so we would make the things for the kitchens and bedrooms first, and those for the dining and drawing room after, as she expected the last would be the most perfect.

Willie said he would make all the bedsteads, as he was sure he could do it best, so Gerty and I made the arm-chairs and couches and small chairs, and auntie said she would make the dressing-tables and looking-glasses and things of that kind; so for days and days we were busy. You would never believe, unless you had to make them, the number of chairs and tables and couches and bedsteads there are required to fit up a house.

First, there was the kitchen. We couldn't give the servants less than six chairs to sit upon; for you see there would be four with the nurse, and of course they might have a friend in to see them, so six chairs was only a proper number. Then there was the kitchen table, and the dresser, and the fender and fire-irons, all to be made with pea-work, and it was really a long while before even these were finished. But we worked away, and very soon all the bedrooms were furnished with everything that could be made with the pea-work, even to the towel-horse and baby's cot, and then there only remained the dining and drawing-room, which auntie said would be the most pleasant part of all, and which she would like to be as good a copy of the same rooms in the house we live in as possible. So, as Willie said, "we studied" the dining and drawing room furniture, and worked very hard to imitate it, and papa said we had become wonderfully clever, till at last even that part of our work was complete; and very lovely it looked, I can tell you.

There is one thing I must warn you against, if you try to furnish a house as we did, and that is, to keep it out of the way of mice, for a greedy mouse came and ate away a lot of the peas out of the tables and chairs and quite spoilt them, and we had to make them over again, and be very careful to keep the kitten in the same room afterwards.

And there is something more I wanted to say. If you want to make your pea-work very firm when it is finished, take some clear gum and a little brush, and paint each pea over with gum, so that the sticks that are fastened in the peas are made more sure of staying in them, and also when it dries to keep the things from shrinking and being crooked and uneven.

But I must hurry on, or you and I will both be tired.

We had such a quantity of modelling to do that papa said we should be clever potters by the time we had finished; for you see there were all the plates and dishes for the kitchen, and all the jugs and basins and baths for the bedrooms, besides cups and saucers, and also some vases to adorn the rooms with, and it was really weeks before we came to the point of having to make the little feather beds and pillows and bedding. By this time both Gerty and I could sew a little, so we could hem the sheets and lots of things of the kind, till at last all was finished, and we had nothing else to do but dress the dolls to live in the house we had furnished for them.

We have nearly finished dressing our dolls now, and papa says when our work is quite complete we shall have a house-warming, and give a large party to all our cousins and little friends, and ask them all to bring their dolls with them to visit our dolls in their grand new house; and then in the evening when the dolls are tired and have had their party we will have one too, and a jolly dance, and make it a regular children's party, for he says we have had so much work that we now quite deserve to play.

Won't it be delightful! auntie is coming to arrange about it this very day, so I must say "Good-bye." I wish you could see our doll's house, and come to our doll's house-warming. I am quite sure you would enjoy it, and determine to have one of your own as soon as possible.

JANE MILL.

## A TALK ABOUT RABBITS.

SOME time ago I took it into my head to keep rabbits. I proposed to my brother that he and I should be partners. The first question was how to get a place for them; well, that was soon settled. I was talking to a gentleman one day, who lives close to us. He said he had an old shed that was only in his way, and spoiled the look of his garden. I told him I would be very glad if he would let me take this difficulty, or rather this shed, off his hands, and build it up for my rabbits. The chief trouble was to carry the wood from his house to ours, for we do not live in the country, where it would be an easy matter. But the more difficulty, the more fun. We were determined to have our shed, and though it did not look very elegant, we wheeled all the wood through the street in a wheelbarrow. The next thing was how to get up all these boards in their proper shape. We don't know much about building, and our wood was rather scarce; so the first thing we did was to pick out a corner where the walls meet at right angles, because that saved the building of two sides of the shed. Having made all the necessary foundations, we set to work in earnest; we tried every plan we could think of, but without success, so we got the help of a carpenter, and soon put up our hut. We thought this was perfection now, and were at once going to buy our rabbits; but the carpenter said that the shed would want something over the top in order to keep out rain, and that we must have hutches before we buy our live stock. We could not but see the truth

of this, so we got some bits of old oilcloth and patched up the roof pretty well.

Christmas was just over; there were a few packing-cases in the house; this looked well for our hutches, but we had to use a good deal of persuasion before we could get leave to take any. We got one at last, and with nails, hinges, wire, &c., we made a very fair hutch.

One of our schoolfellows, who lives next door, gave my brother a small white rabbit; we were of course greatly interested about this one. But we found out that although rabbits appear very hardy, rough little creatures, that can live anywhere and on anything, they really require a great deal of care. For instance, they must be fed regularly every day; it does not do to give them a good breakfast one day and none at all the next. Another thing is, they must not be given too much green food; there is no harm in giving them a little every day,—in fact, they must have some; but it is no reason because they won't eat the oats you give them in the morning that you are to feed them entirely on green food.

After a time my brother got a fine large doe; at first she seemed very healthy, but soon she refused to eat. We bought some "Thorley's food," and that did make her eat occasionally. I am quite convinced that if that rabbit had been given much green food she would never have looked at any other. As it was she would only eat a very little food of any kind. No matter what we tried, we could not get her to eat, and she gradually became thinner and thinner, till at last we gave her away, thinking her a disgrace to our little white one.

This little one was killed by one of its playmates belonging to the fellow next door; we had had very little experience at that time, and did not know how fond rabbits are of fighting, nor how quickly they can kill each other.

We returned a verdict of "rabbit-slaughter" against the offender, and forbid him to come into our shed again, or in any way to associate with our rabbits. One day a plumber working in our house told me there was a large double hutch for sale in the town—a great bargain. I immediately ran off to where he directed me. It was not a regular rabbit-shop, but a house, and it was the landlady who wished to sell the hutch. I walked into the back yard where I saw the hutch, and in it was a fine lop-eared rabbit eating cabbage. The woman said she was selling the hutch for five shillings and the rabbit for half a crown. I arranged for them to be sent after me, and went home in triumph. Next morning the hutch, with the rabbit in it, was sent up. We got it into the garden all right, but the hutch was very big, the door of our shed was very small, and in spite of all our efforts the hutch seemed likely to have to remain in the open air. We saw the only plan would be to pull out some of the boards from one side of the shed; this we did, and got in our hutch with great trouble.

*We have now five rabbits*—two does, that is two old mothers, called Rose and Sandy; a buck, Sir Patrick; and two young ones, Smut and Sweep. Rose is Smut and Sweep's mother.

I should like to give some advice to my young readers in case they should take it into their heads, as I once took it into mine, to keep rabbits.

1. If possible always have large hutches, and keep them as clean as you can, changing their beds say twice or three times a week, also get as airy a place as possible, for it does not do to keep them too much shut up.

2. Never keep a hutch on the ground, for it is generally damp, and may give the rabbit cramp.

3. Always feed them on oats in the morning at about nine or ten o'clock; give them a little green in the afternoon at two or three o'clock and put them to bed in winter-time at about seven o'clock (that is to say, cover them over with canvas or something warm). There is no necessity to cover them in summer, as it is so warm.

4. When a rabbit has young ones, cover her up, so that when you are feeding her she will not be able to see you, nor you to see the young rabbits, for if by chance you do see them, the mother is sure to eat them up. You can take them from their mother ten days after their birth, and don't look at them until you take them away.

G. J. S.

## "EVER WITH THE LORD."

"EVER with the Lord!" what gladness
From this sweet assurance springs!
Chasing all those thoughts of sadness
Which bereavement often brings.
Ever with the Lord, our sister
Calmly rests from every care;
And though loving hearts have missed her,
Still they joy that she is there.

"With *the Lord!*" not with a stranger,
But with Him who loves her best;
Safe from every sin and danger,
Never more by conflicts prest.
Life is full of grief and sighing,
But her peace serenely flows;
On her Saviour's bosom lying,
Nothing mars her deep repose.

"Ever with the Lord!" how saintly
Was her life while here below!
May we tread, however faintly,
In her steps, and like her grow;
Till the Lord shall come, restoring
All the friends we love so well;
Then we too, with joy upsoaring,
"Ever with the Lord" shall dwell.

H. M. W.

## EDITORIAL NOTICE.

Letters for the Editor should be addressed to the Rev. DR. WHITTEMORE, 12A, Paternoster Row, London. If otherwise addressed they may be overlooked.

# SUNSHINE.

EDITED BY W. M. WHITTEMORE, D.D., RECTOR OF ST. KATHERINE CREE, LONDON.

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[ETHEL AND GIPSY TIM.]

## LITTLE ALINE.

### A STORY OF GIPSY LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PET'S DIFFICULTIES."

### CHAPTER XXVIII.—THE SONG OF THE THRUSH.

IT was early in the morning, but the sun had been up a long time, and so had the little birds, for the sun and the birds had a good day's work before them, and they were not like some boys and girls whom I know, who begin late, are always in a hurry, and so get behindhand with what they have to do.

The sun was shining, the birds were singing, and the smoke was curling out of some of the gipsy tents and vans. For most of the gipsies were off to a neighbouring town, it being market day there, to ply their different trades, and to earn an honest penny.

And among the number was Aline's aunt. She was not a woman to let the grass grow under *her* feet; and now that her husband was so ill, she

left no stone unturned that might have water under it. So she had been early astir; had kindled a bit of fire while Aline and Tim were asleep, and had drunk her cup of tea and eaten her crust of bread before either of them had roused from their slumbers.

"Why didn't you call me?" said Aline, as she opened her eyes and saw her aunt just ready to depart, a quantity of baskets that poor Tim's feeble fingers had helped to make slung over her shoulders, and a larger one full of wild nuts and flowers carried in her hand.

"There was no need for it, child; the day will be long enough for you as it is; mind and get your uncle all that he wants, and take care of him till I comes back."

Aline promised, and her aunt trusted her as thoroughly as she would have trusted herself, and trudged cheerfully off on her four miles' walk, in the hope of bringing home some money for their daily wants.

As soon as Aline was dressed she gave her uncle his breakfast. He drank the tea eagerly, but he could not touch the bread and butter, which had been purposely saved for him, and he told Aline to eat it herself. Aline had a good appetite, and she had no difficulty in disposing of the bread and butter, in addition to her own slices of bread; but she could not help thinking, as she saw how white her uncle's face looked, and how weary he seemed, though he had only just awaked from a long sleep, that he was worse than usual.

"Push open the canvas as wide as you can, Aline, for I can hardly breathe," he said, presently.

There was no great warmth in the sun's rays, and Aline felt rather cool than otherwise; but Tim was hot and restless, and his forehead was quite damp. The fresh breeze that stole gently in revived him, and just then a little bird on a neighbouring tree poured forth its morning song, and its melody seemed to please him.

"Do you hear that thrush, Aline? It's finer music to my taste, than them organs that folks are so crazy after."

"It's thanking God for the bright sunshine—at least, that is what Miss Ethel told me," answered Aline. "She said that the birds, and the flowers, and the trees, and the clouds, and the rain, and the dew, and everything that God has made praise Him."

"Not a bad idea that," observed Tim. "But they don't all sing, though."

"Miss Ethel said they all do what God wants them to do, and that that was the best sort of praise. They are better than us, uncle."

"How do you make that out, child? I'm sure I've worked hard enough in my time."

"Yes, uncle, but that was for yourself, not for God. And I never heard you praise Him for anything, uncle—not even on Sundays."

Tim was silent. Aline feared that she had perhaps offended him; but it was, in truth, the conviction of his own shortcomings which kept him from answering. He felt, all in a moment, what a godless life he had hitherto been leading—a life passed without one real wish to serve or to please the great and good God who had made him.

Aline quietly cleared away the few breakfast-things and tidied the place, the thrush continued its sweet song as if it were a delight to it to warble forth its praise, and Tim was all the while considering how neglectful he had been of his soul and of his Maker.

"I can think and I can love, and that thrush can do neither," he said to himself, "and yet I have never sent up one note of praise to God, and have never prayed to Him. I am not fit to go and live where He is; besides, it is not at all likely that He'd let me into heaven when I have not cared about Him. I wonder what will become of me?"

God had sent that thrush as a winged messenger to reprove the sick gipsy, and to bring his sin to his remembrance. He heaved a deep sigh presently, and when Aline asked him whether anything was the matter, he said,—

"No; I was only wishing I was that little bird, Aline."

"Wishing you were a bird, uncle! What for?"

"Because then I should have done all I ought to have done; I should not have anything to blame myself for."

"But, uncle, there is nobody like that," said Aline. "Why, the folks that goes to church says, after the clergyman, 'We have erred and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep; we have left undone the things that we ought to have done, and we have done the things that we ought not to have done, and there is no health in us.'"

"That just suits *me*, Aline. Oh, I have been such a sinner!"

"Listen to what comes next, uncle: 'But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us miserable offenders. Spare Thou them that confess their faults.'"

"Lord, have mercy upon me! Spare me!" repeated her uncle, fervently.

Then he closed his eyes, and was soon dozing again. But he breathed hurriedly, and moved restlessly in his sleep, though Aline was careful not to make the least noise that would disturb him.

In about half an hour he suddenly started, and looking round him with a frightened air, he exclaimed,—

"Where am I? Where am I going? Oh, what shall I do?"

"You are here, all safe, uncle," said Aline, soothingly.

But she failed to calm his agitation. Tim felt that his time on earth was perhaps drawing short; he knew that he was not ready to go, and that was why he was so distressed. Aline wished her aunt was at home. She was just thinking that she would call in a woman who was close at hand, and then fetch the doctor, when Ethel came to the tent opening and walked gently inside. She had brought some jelly and some beef tea for the

sick man. Faith had accompanied her, but she had stopped to speak to one of the gipsy mothers, for whose little baby she had been making a frock. Ethel and Faith had often visited Tim, and had read to him, so that he was used to them both, and he seemed pleased now to see Ethel.

In answer to her inquiries how he was, he said he was very bad, and had such strange sort of feelings all over him; and Ethel agreed with Aline's whispered suggestion of going for the doctor. Faith would be with her almost directly, so that she did not mind being left alone with the poor man; besides, there were plenty of gipsies in the camp who would come to her at a moment's notice.

She began reading a chapter to Tim, but he interrupted her so with his sighs and exclamations that she could not get on; so she shut up the Bible and tried to comfort him in the best way that she could. It was not so easy to do this as she had expected. Tim put away all the cheering promises she repeated with the despairing reply that they were not for him.

At last she said that beautiful text to him, "'God so loved the world,'—not good people only, but all people; He loved the world, and you are in the world, aren't you?—'and He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever'—that means everybody—'believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' You see, Tim, God does not want you to perish; He wants you to be saved, because He loves you."

"Whosoever! surely that takes in even me!" said Tim, a gleam of hope lighting up his face. "God so loved the world," he murmured, "then He loved me, and must be willing to save me."

A violent fit of coughing came on, and when it was over he was so exhausted that he could not speak any more, and appeared too ill to notice who was beside him. Ethel only remained till Aline returned, and then she and Faith went back to the farm, talking to each other about poor Tim, and fearing that he could not last much longer.

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## Chapter XXIX.—Mr. Cleveland is surprised.

Aline had not found the doctor at home. He was out, visiting some of his patients who lived at a little distance; but the servant promised directly he returned to tell him how ill Tim was.

In the afternoon Ethel went for her music lesson. She was glad to have the opportunity of seeing Miss Cleveland, for she wanted to speak to her about Tim, and to ask her if Mr. Cleveland would go on to see him as soon as he could. For Ethel felt that the clergyman would be able to instruct and comfort the poor man far better than herself. She was but an inexperienced child, and could not make things plain to grown-up people.

When she reached the house Miss Cleveland was not there. She had been hastily summoned to the wife of one of the labourers, whose little child was fearfully burnt. An elder sister who had charge of him during the mother's absence had run into the next garden to show her new bonnet to another girl, and the little one's pinafore had caught fire.

Miss Cleveland was clever in dressing burns or wounds, and she was always sent for when such disasters occurred in the village. She had left word that she should soon be back, and that Ethel was to wait till she returned. So Ethel waited.

But she had not anything to do, and the time appeared long. She got up and looked out at the window, but there was nothing to repay her for the glance, except a flock of sheep in the opposite meadow, and a donkey that was leisurely browsing in the lane.

Presently she heard some footsteps on the gravelled path, and saw Mr. Cleveland coming from the back into the front garden. His study was at the back of the house, and as its windows opened to the ground, he often stepped out that way instead of troubling himself to open and shut the front door. He was most likely going out on one of his long rounds of visits; for his parishioners were very scattered, and if that were the case he would not be in again till late tea. Unless Ethel stopped him now and told him about Tim she would not be able to do so that day, and to-morrow might be too late. So Ethel ran out hastily into the garden and reached Mr. Cleveland just as his hand was on the gate.

"May I speak to you for a minute, please?"

"Certainly, my dear; what can I do for you?"

"It is not for myself, it's for Tim, one of the gipsies," said Ethel, hurriedly. "I want you to go and see him if you can; he is very ill, perhaps dying."

"Has he asked for me? has he sent any message?"

"No, but he seemed a good deal troubled this morning when I was there; he did not feel that he was ready to go, and I thought you could help him."

"Have you been in the habit, then, of seeing him?" said Mr. Cleveland, half wondering at Ethel's familiarity with a gipsy.

"Yes; he is Aline's uncle. Aline is the little girl, you know, that Faith and I have been teaching, and since Tim has been ill, Margaret has often sent him soup and jelly; and we have gone to read the Bible to him; there was nobody else to do it."

Nobody else to do it! I do not know whether Mr. Cleveland's conscience rebuked him at that moment, for not looking after those stray sheep in the wilderness, but certainly nothing was further from Ethel's thoughts than the idea of reproaching her minister for any lack of service.

"Did he seem to like your reading to him?" he said, after a moment's pause.

"At first we could hardly tell whether he listened or not, but the last two or three weeks

he has been very different; he has begged us each time to come again soon, and he has said that he wanted to go to heaven when he died."

"And could you tell him the way to heaven?" asked the grave clergyman, looking down kindly at his young companion.

"Oh yes, Jesus is the way there, and we must trust in Him to save us," said Ethel.

"And do you love the Saviour and trust in Him, my little girl?"

"I think I do," said Ethel; "and that is why I want poor Tim to know how kind and good He is. You will call and see him, won't you, Mr. Cleveland?"

"Yes, dear child, I will go there first. I am glad you have read the Bible to him; it is the best of books."

"I did not use to care much about it till Faith came to live at the farm," said Ethel, frankly; "but now we often read it together, and I understand your sermons so much better than I did."

Mr. Cleveland smiled. "I must ask you some questions about them another time. I must not stay longer now, as I have several sick persons to visit. Good-bye, dear child, and may God bless you."

He laid his hand with a fatherly touch on her head, and then shutting the gate after himself—he would not let her do that—he went on his way.

I think he felt a little surprised about Ethel as he walked along. He was usually so wrapt up in his studies, and in his learned books, that he was not sufficiently observant of what was passing around him, and he knew so very little about children, that he did not suppose, except in rare instances, that they had any serious thoughts about religion until they were old enough to be confirmed. He had seldom spoken to Ethel beyond inquiring how she was, and how her parents were, and expressing the hope that she was a good girl; and now here she was visiting a poor dying gipsy, and evidently anxious about his future happiness. The gipsies were a wandering race; he had not reckoned them as parishioners, nor thought that he could benefit them, and therefore he had been content to leave them to themselves; but Ethel's request had opened his eyes to his duty, and he blamed himself that he had not manifested more concern for their welfare.

Ethel watched him crossing the meadow, and she wondered how she had talked so freely to the tall, dignified Mr. Cleveland, who always seemed to her as dry and as unapproachable as a Greek verb or a chapter of Hebrew. The truth was, she was so in earnest about poor Tim that she forgot herself, and when we can do that we are sure to be easy and natural.

Aline was astonished to see Mr. Cleveland coming to their gipsy tent, but she was gratified by his call, for she considered it was a mark of *respect* paid to her uncle that the clergyman *should come and see him.* Not that he wanted *much comfort now, poor fellow.* The text Ethel quoted to him had given him peace, and there was a calm and even bright expression on his features, of which Mr. Cleveland well understood the cause. It was the expression of a heart that was resting in God's love.

Tim could not talk much, he was too weak; but the few words he did say convinced Mr. Cleveland that he was building his hope upon the true foundation.

"I've got hold of Miss Ethel's text, sir," he said in broken utterances, "and I mean to cling to it. God loved the world; He loved *me*; He has given His Son for me, and I am one of the whosoevers. He won't go from His word, sir; I know He won't; and I shall never perish, no, never perish!"

With deep thankfulness Mr. Cleveland heard the gipsy's dying testimony to God's faithfulness. He was there to learn rather than to teach; to learn how God often chooses the weak things of this world for the fulfilment of His own purpose, in order that no one may glory in His presence.

Dr. Butler had already been to the camp, and had told Tim's wife, who had returned from town, that her husband was rapidly sinking; he might live through the night, but even that was doubtful.

When Mr. Cleveland went away he promised to be there early in the morning, and he kept his promise, though it was without much expectation of seeing poor Tim alive. He was, however, alive and perfectly conscious, though he breathed his last a few minutes after the clergyman's arrival.

Just as he was passing away, a thrush close by burst forth in a joyous song, and Tim opened his eyes and said, with a faint smile—

"That little bird taught me how sinful I was. *I* can praise God now, Aline—tell Miss Ethel—whosoever—I'm not afraid to die."

Little Aline's uncle was gone to sing that new song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

## Chapter XXX.—Pleasant News.

Whether Aline's aunt was in a hurry to get away from the place where she had lost her husband, or whether the plans of the gipsies required their immediate departure, I cannot say, but as soon as possible after poor Tim's funeral they packed up their goods and left the neighbourhood.

Ethel missed Aline, and was sorry to part with her, for Margaret had proposed having her at the farm every day to teach her the mysteries of cooking and house-cleaning, with a view to her becoming a tidy little servant, perhaps at the Hall, who could tell? Aline had learnt so much from Ethel and Faith, that she wanted to become something better than a gipsy girl singing at fairs, or hawking baskets about from town to town.

It might be that her aunt did not choose she should forsake, as Ralph had done, the wandering

habits of her tribe, and had therefore contrived to remove her from the influence of her new friends; at all events, they were off, nobody knew where, and it was very uncertain when they would return. Faith and Ethel were happy, however, in the belief that Aline would remember the simple instructions they had given her, and that her Father in heaven would watch over her and would shield her from the evils by which she was surrounded.

Ethel would probably have regretted more than she did Aline's unexpected going away, but she had a fresh and most pleasant subject to occupy her thoughts at that time. Her father had written to her to say that he and her mother would be home very shortly, and that they were delighted at the prospect of seeing their dear little girl again, and of having her always with them. The tone of his letter was so exceedingly kind, so much kinder than he had ever been in the habit of sending to Ethel—indeed, he had seldom written to her at all—that Ethel's joy in looking forward to their arrival was deepened by the persuasion that her papa was beginning to love her like her mamma did.

Faith entered into Ethel's gladness, for she had learnt that most difficult of lessons, to rejoice with those who rejoice; and she was so happy herself in her new home, that though she still fondly remembered her mother, the bitterness of her grief had quite worn off, and she rarely alluded to the past.

Ethel's father and mother were returning home through Paris, they were to spend a fortnight there, and then they would cross to Dover and come straight to the Hall; so Ethel could now count up the days that she had to wait.

"Perhaps they will come back earlier than we expect," said Margaret one morning at breakfast-time, when the subject was being talked about.

"No, I don't think they will do that," replied Ethel, "papa has several friends in Paris whom he will want to see, and a fortnight soon passes away."

Margaret glanced at her husband and smiled, but though Ethel remembered it afterwards she scarcely noticed it at the time.

"Would you like to walk down to the Hall with me?" said Margaret to Ethel, later on in the day; "I promised Mrs. Deane (Mrs. Deane was the housekeeper) some eggs, and I have no one whom I can conveniently send with them."

Ethel readily agreed, for Faith had gone to the town with her uncle to get measured for a new pair of boots, and, though it looked dull without either of her parents in it, yet it was pleasant to take an occasional peep at her old home.

## A QUESTION FOR SINGERS.

READER, you often sing as you best can, perhaps you sing well. What will you do with *your* voice in eternity.

## SCOBIE.

### A TRUE STORY.

### PART FIRST.

HER name was Scobie, and she was just the most wonderful cat in the country-side. She was also the most beautiful.

Some people prefer tabbies, and no doubt tabbies are in their way worthy of all the admiration bestowed upon them; they certainly convey to the eye a more correct idea of the great head of their genus, the tiger, than do the white, black, or yellow cats. But in the matter of colouring none can compare with the tortoiseshell. Scobie was a tortoiseshell.

When I was a child my mother used to coil her silky hair round her head and fasten it with a high tortoiseshell comb, that in the sunlight revealed rich tints of crimson and gold, but not more varied, not more beautiful than Scobie's coat.

How shall I tell you how varied were the hues of my pet's glossy coat,—the shining stripes waving down the golden lines, which shading into burnished russet curved round centres of spotless white! She had the stoutest and meekest of faces, so round and cherub-like, you felt you could almost trust her with your pet and plump bullfinch.

That might have proved too confiding perhaps, but yet she was a well-principled cat. She had undeniable notions of honour, which perhaps might have stood the test of a tempting bullfinch or even a luscious golden fish. Never was she guilty of getting on the table and stealing tit-bits from the plates. However hungry she might be, she waited until her time to be served came, and then she daintily ate her dainty mess from a pretty china dish, which was kept expressly for her, never spilling any on the ground, and never leaving a spot on her smooth face; she was always most careful to avoid dipping her long whiskers into the mess, and when the repast was ended she invariably went opposite the fire or into the sun, and performed her toilet demurely and satisfactorily.

She had too the whitest of breasts, and when she sat up, her bushy black tail curled round her fore-legs straight before her, and blinked in the blaze of the fire or the rays of the sun, I don't think you could see a prettier animal anywhere, certainly not a prettier cat.

She was a staid cat too, not much given to roving, and never by any chance into neighbours' houses. Some cats are great gad-abouts; if they are not rambling over the tiles or on the tops of walls, they are poking their whiskers into the larder next door, or creeping under the half-open window into the pantry where they know the milk is kept. They will even go into the dust-bin and see if they can get a stray piece of fish, or the neck of a chicken. But these are low cats, with no well-bred instincts; however well fed they are at home, they love pilfering and prying. Scobie had

none of these vulgar ways. She did do a little rambling occasionally, and doubtless often regaled herself with an unwary sparrow or a too trusting robin, but never was she known to blink even at a caged bird in a neighbour's window, or to sit suggestively opposite to the milkman's can. She had also a sovereign contempt for the cat's-meat man. Perhaps she was too well fed at home, but in any case she was dainty, rejecting anything the least tainted.

Scobie's home was a pretty cottage near a town. There was a nice walled-in garden at the back, a pretty conservatory at the side, and a croquet lawn in the front. There were also stables behind the garden, a poultry range, and some nice fields where cows were kept. Scobie loved the stables and the denizens of the stables, Jess, the grey mare, and old Martin, the gardener and coachman.

The loft above the stable was a cosy little nook. It had one window looking into the garden, and round the opening grew jasmine and roses, making a pleasant shade and shedding sweet odour. All day and night in summer, when the weather was fine, this window lay open, and there in the sun was Scobie's favourite place. There she would lie, her tiny dainty paws turned under her plump breast, her innocent eyes blinking contentedly in the sun.

When Jess was eating her daily allowance of oats, Scobie would lie in the hollow of her back, and often the kind old mare would turn her head round with a loving gesture, and give her nose a friendly elevation towards her purring and happy friend. Perhaps they understood each other. There is always something soothing in the purring of a cat. So Jess with the fragrant oats under her nose, and Scobie's music in her ears, must have felt very contented, to say the least.

Scobie descending from her elevated seat was a pretty sight. So lightly and carefully she came down the mare's shoulder, slowly too, as if lingering over a pleasure; then standing on the ledge of the manger curving her back, elevating her tail, purring and rubbing herself up against Jess's sleek head. On these occasions Jess would smell her all over, giving a little "winny" of approval and affection. If old Martin by any accident happened to be a few minutes later with the oats, Scobie never was late. There she was, always at her post, cosily ensconced in the hollow of the big friend's back.

There was also another occupant of the cottage between whom and Scobie a fast friendship had been sealed; this was a small terrier named Busy. Busy was dignified by the specific term of terrier, but that was merely in compliment to her mother, who was a renowned rough Irish terrier, great at the destruction of rats, and wonderful in the demolition of rabbits, but her father was a very highly bred Blenheim spaniel with a Blenheim nose of *such elevation, you almost* felt inclined to hang *something on it.*

Busy was white, smooth, had long legs, a short tail, and the most beautiful of heads, just her papa's head, great soft eyes and pearly teeth. It was, considering all these advantages of person, rather hard on Busy to call her a mongrel, but I am afraid she was only a mongrel, and had no right to the name of terrier, which means a distinct species.

However, Busy had all the instincts of her mother, could toss a cat and kill a rat; she was not, however, over-courageous, and never was known to settle a dispute with even a smaller dog in the usual canine way. She invariably, after rather a bristly defiance, lowered her aggressive stump of a tail, and made for home as fast as her four legs would carry her.

Between Scobie and Busy a perfect friendship subsisted. They would eat out of the same dish, Busy leaving hers to feed with Scobie, and Scobie returning the compliment. If Scobie was in the room, nothing would prevail on Busy to eat her dinner until she either joined her or ate her own. On the rug before the fire the two lay in friendly embrace, and at night when Scobie took no moonlight wanderings they shared the same bed, which was also their mistress's. There on the foot in the soft eider down quietly they lay. In the morning when the early cup of tea was brought, they lapped their allowance out of the same saucer, after which they departed for an exploring ramble in the garden.

The affection existing between the two was as warm and constant as nature. It happened that Scobie became ill. She refused food and lay still and listless on the rug. The hour for Jess's oats passed unheeded, as also that for the milking of the cows. Scobie stirred not. Busy did not enjoy her dinner that day. For some hours she refused to touch it; then suddenly starting up, as if struck by a happy thought, she brought a bone from her plate and laid it before her friend. Scobie ungratefully did not seem touched by this attention, she moved from her position on the rug, and lay down at a distance from her friend, then at continued attentions got up and left the room.

Now Scobie was a tender-hearted cat, loving and gentle to her mistress and constant in her friendships, but when her first little kittens came into the world she did not show the affection expected from her character. She had four, and three out of the four were drowned; the fourth, which was kept because of its colour, which was tortoiseshell like its mother, was a weakly little thing, and Scobie refused to nurse it. In vain was it to place the little thing beside her, coaxing her to give it nourishment by saucerfuls of good milk and tit-bits of fish and chicken. She would none of it. Scobie's mistress, greatly distressed, took the tiny forsaken creature in her hand, and with a teaspoon fed it with warm milk. She then laid it down on the rug, covering it up with warm flannel. Returning to the room after an absence she found Busy curled up before the fire, licking

something between her paws. It was the forsaken kitten; she had taken it to her motherly breast to warm and guard, and there it lay, Busy seldom leaving it, and then only for short intervals. Scobie in the most heartless manner had returned to her ordinary routine of life, lying beside Busy, eating with her her food, but taking no more notice of her kitten than if it had not been there. When the kitten could run about, Scobie allowed it to crawl over her, but beyond this permitted no familiarity. In process of time the kitten was bestowed upon a neighbour, and for a long time Busy was inconsolable.

M. E. S.

## A BURIED PROVERB.

EACH of the following lines contains one word of a proverb of Solomon:—

Seest thou the mission that before thee lies?
Thou needst not ask a grander enterprise.
To raise a soul from sin's dark misery,
To show how fallen man restored can be,
If thou art wise, a nobler task will seem,
Than to pass all thy life in pleasure's dream.
God gives each one his work, then seek to know
What thine own work is ere thou further go.
In doing it be humble, for conceit,
If it be there, will oft ensure defeat.
The secret of success is faith and prayer.
God gives more grace, then ask a larger share.
Work on in sure glad hope; there soon shall dawn,
The promised radiance of a glorious morn.
Even if now a life despised be thine,
If counted for a fool, do not repine;
Wiser than worldly schemes, thy toil and strife;
Thou shall receive from Christ a crown of life,
With Him for ever live and in His glory shine.

W. M. W.

## BURIED CITIES.

1. Hubert is such a mad rider, he will break his neck some day.
2. Ali-Baba, the captain of the Forty Thieves, was killed.
3. He cleared away the *débris* tolerably quickly.
4. We saw several sheep; some were going to be killed.
5. Papa rises every morning at six o'clock.
6. It lies yonder by the mountain.

MARY WYNNE.

## LIFE IN ITALY.

SOLUTION OF THE NINETY-SECOND PICTURE STORY.

IT was in a warmer clime than England, that, partially sheltered by the broad leaves of the vine, a young girl stood, whose dark eyes and complexion plainly showed that Italian blood ran through her veins.

For a long time she was busily employed in stripping the stunted bushes of their purple clusters; then as noon drew on, and the usual mid day rest approached, she picked up her basket and carried it to the foot of a large tree in the corner of the vineyard, where, after having laid herself down, she soon fell asleep.

She might have been resting there half an hour, when two men cautiously approached the other side of the tree, where they seated themselves, and were soon engrossed in a deep and earnest conversation. Of what they talked is not for us to repeat; suffice it that when the young girl awoke, these words, spoken in a loud and angry voice, met her ear,—"Well, unless you will make it worth my while, and assure me the ransom will be good, I will have no hand in kidnapping Jonathan Haywood's child."

"Ay, ay, I will promise you that," was the answer; "but what do you say to taking the child to the hills at the west, where our best and strongest hiding-place is?"

"Capital, could not do better," replied his comrade.

At the conclusion of this conversation the men arose, quitted the tree, and bent their steps towards Jonathan Haywood's dwelling. Ah! you wise and cunning men, little do you dream who has been lying under that tree, delighting in the same shade that you have been enjoying!

But we must follow the men; they go out of the vineyard, and along a lane for some distance, thence they enter through a gap in the hedge an orchard, where underneath another shady tree a pretty boy of some six summers, with flaxen hair and dark blue eyes, is sitting perusing a picture-book. Quick as lightning one of the men rushed forward and seized the child; of course he cried most lustily, but his screams were soon stopped by the other brigand tying a handkerchief across his mouth.

Meanwhile, after the men had quitted the tree, Rosetta sat musing for a few minutes; then leaving her basket by the tree, she started up, and with all possible speed hastened to the same cottage whither the brigands had bent their steps, the English settler's home.

But, alas! she was too late, robbers and child were both gone, and she was only in time to enter the cottage and tell the parents what she had overheard and the result.

Horror-stricken and frightened, the parents were speechless for some time; then as the mother thought of her beautiful boy carried off she hardly knew whither by those ruffians, she roused herself to think what was best to be done to remedy the evil.

Fortunately, there was a regiment of soldiers who had that day been quartered in the little village; they were in search of some brigands, who it was reported had pillaged a house and murdered the inmates.

Now the mother thought of these soldiers; oh, if she could get them to attack the robbers and find her boy! But then she was poor, she could not afford to pay them, she would have nothing to return but her grateful and humble thanks; would that satisfy them? she could not tell, but she would try.

So she went to the commander of the regiment and told her pitiful story. Oh yes, he was quite willing to go. He had a bright boy of his own at home, just the age of her Johnny; he felt for her, and would do his utmost to regain her lost child.

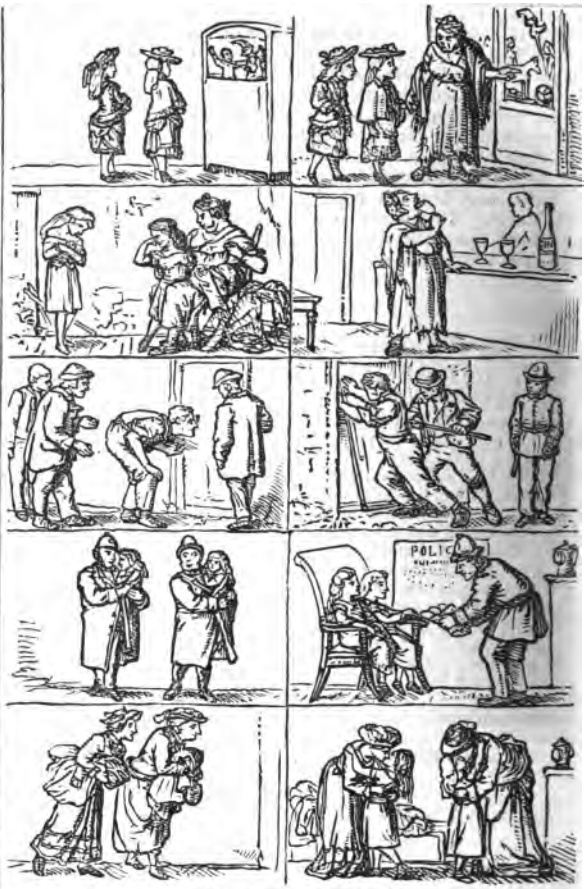
True to his word, as soon as it began to grow dusk, he set off with his little band towards the robbers' hiding-place. It was nearly dark when they reached their destination; but there was a bright moon, which afforded the soldiers sufficient light to see to climb the rocks; it was no easy matter to ascend those steep and precipitous crags, but it was not the first time they had climbed dangerous places after brigands, so they soon accomplished their task and reached the top. Having searched about for some time they came upon the brigands: so completely were they taken by surprise, and so unprepared for an attack, that although they made a vigorous struggle they were at length captured. The poor little frightened boy was soon found, crouched behind a bush; so tenderly lifting him in his arms a rough soldier carried him safely to his mother, then modestly retiring, left the father and mother to enjoy the embrace of their lost child, unobserved by human eyes.

Then when the first embrace was over, and the mother had put her boy to rest, she sat down to think of all that had happened that day. She thought of the brave soldiers who had found her child and brought happiness back to her home, and she determined that if her boy could restore happiness to any mother's heart, as those had done, he should be a soldier.

She thought of Rosetta,—how, humanly speaking, it was quite as much owing to her as to any one that her child was restored. And lastly, but not least, she thought of Him whose will it was that her child should be stolen, that when he was restored she might have the greater pleasure and feel the more thankful for all His mercies. Nor were the soldiers unrewarded for their trouble; the same brigands who had stolen the little boy proved to be the very ones they were in search of; they were taken to gaol, tried, and found guilty, and the soldiers were handsomely rewarded for having rid the country of such dangerous foes.

BERTHA L. (15).

*Croydon.*



## PICTURE STORY.

### No. XCIV.

HONOURABLE MENTION.—Marie A. M., Amy H. B., Fanny J. T., Florence M. C., Catherine W. H. J., Ethel L. T., Lizzie H., Georgie E. P., Edith S., Bertha M., Annie E. C., Elizabeth A. G., Bluestripes, Marian A., Annie E. W., Emily J. G., Katie A., Eleanor J. S., Minna B., Edith G. H., Margaret E. N., Minnie R., Wilhelmina C., Susan G., Ella H., Emily H. S., May C., May P., Margaret M., Louisa A. B., Fanny H. S., Kate E. D., Emily and Lucy M. B., Fannie M. T., Mary Ann A., Ella M. R., Emily A. M. and Athena F. M. I., Margaret H. P., Laura E. O., Lilla M. T., Madeline F. J., Florence M. E., Martha H., Constance F. B., Nellie M., Laura J. D., Lily E., Lydia L.; Samuel H. W. A., Thomson D. F. V., W. Cosmo G. L., Tom B., Arthur T. V. B.

The rules, which require a strict compliance, were given in January. Some nice-looking solutions were not even read, because their writers had forgotten the rules. We cannot undertake to criticise and return solutions. Thanks for photographs, which we always like to have sent.

EDITOR.

[NEWS OF THE LOST ONES.]

# AUNT MILLICENT'S CHARGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SOLDIER HAROLD," &C.

## CHAPTER XX.—THE PERILS OF THE SEA.

"OH, aunt Millicent," exclaimed Agatha, rushing into the vicarage drawing-room an hour later, with her hair flying over her shoulders, and her dress considerably disordered by the wind, "I have been down to the shore just now, and what do you think I have heard? old Sheldon the fisherman tells me that Arnold and the Gascoigne boys are out in a boat in all the storm and wind, and that there is not a bit of chance of them ever getting back again! Eldridge and Martin have gone after them, but Sheldon says they are sure all to be drowned together, for no boat can live out with the *sea as it is now.*"

And Agatha paused for breath, which her rapid talking and the wind together had almost taken away. In her eagerness to tell her story she had not noticed the way in which Millicent put her hand to her side; but she saw now how white she looked.

"Auntie, dear auntie, what is the matter?" she cried, springing towards her; "are you going to faint? shall I run for nurse?"

"No, dear, I shall be better soon," was the gentle answer, as the colour came back gradually to the pale cheek; "you told your news a little too hastily, that was all; tell me quietly again what you have heard."

Agatha repeated more calmly the tidings she had gathered on the shore; and Millicent, as she listened, found there was quite sufficient cause for alarm.

"They were foolish boys to go with no better boatman than that boy Dick, weren't they,

auntie? May I go up to the top of the cliff and see if I can see anything of them?"

"No, dear, I think not; the wind is so strong, it would be too much for you."

"Old Sheldon said they would drift upwards. The nursery window looks north, I will run up there; we can see a long way out to sea from that window. I may do that, auntie?"

"Yes, certainly."

Agatha ran upstairs, and Millicent stood a minute with her hands tightly clasped together, thinking over the news she had heard. She felt terribly anxious; she tried, as she always did, to carry her trouble to the only source of comfort, but her nerves had been much shaken by the suddenness of the tidings, and she could not help fearing the worst.

As soon as she could collect her thoughts sufficiently she went into the study, for her brother must be told of the peril his boy was in. Mr. Grey looked up from his desk, and held out his hand to her.

"Is that you, Millicent? How thoughtful of you to give me a fire, dear! It is very stormy, and likely to be a fierce night out at sea, I am afraid. God grant there may be no one in danger!"

"Oh, Bertram," and Millicent trembled as she leaned against him for support, "I greatly fear our Arnold is out in it all!"

And then she told him as well as she could what Agatha had heard. Mr. Grey could hardly stay to listen to the end. He started up and seized his top-coat and his boots which he had laid aside half an hour before.

"Don't do anything rash, Bertram," pleaded Millicent.

"I must go down to the shore and see for myself what chance there is," he answered, in a voice that he vainly tried to make steady.

Millicent would fain have gone too, but she knew it would be foolish to attempt it. The wind was very high and the air cold, and her health and strength might be of more use by and by. So she was content to wait, but the waiting and suspense were very hard to bear.

She joined Agatha at the nursery window, but they could see nothing, only the white foam of the waves as they dashed against the cliffs, and soon it was too dark even to see that. Once Mr. Grey came back, but he had nothing encouraging to relate. Mr. Gascoigne and he had been watching and straining their eyes, but with no better success than the watchers at home, and there seemed but very little hope amongst the fishermen that the boats could live through the storm.

Hugh and Eva had gone to bed, and had forgotten their trouble in childhood's dreamless sleep; but Agatha and Johnnie crowded round their father with eager, anxious faces to hear what he had to say.

*He put an arm* round each.

"*We can do nothing further* to help dear Arnold, *my darlings*," *he said, gently*; "the great huge sea has him at his mercy, but there is One who sees him even in the midst of the darkness and the tempest—the great God, who holds the waters in the hollow of His hand. Shall we ask Him to preserve our precious Arnold, and bring him safe home again?"

With bowed heads and throbbing hearts the children knelt while Mr. Grey prayed earnestly and fervently for the help and safety of those who were in peril. And then he went back to the shore, but his words and his prayer had left a gleam of hope and comfort on those who remained behind.

At last, towards midnight, there came tidings. A piece of dirty crumpled paper was passed from one to another of the fishermen until it reached Mr. Gascoigne's hand. A man had brought it to Sheldon's cottage. Eldridge had given it to him, and told him to leave it there, and his wife brought it down to the crowd on the shore directly. But she had not thought to ask the man where he came from, and he had not told her.

Mr. Gascoigne had much difficulty in making out the words by the flickering light of the lantern which Sheldon held, and when he did succeed it was only this,—

"The boys are safe; nothing worse than a good wetting; hope to get them home to-morrow."

That was all. No name and no place, nothing to tell where they were, or how rescued; and with that they were obliged to be content.

It was much to know that they were safe, and yet the two anxious fathers would have given a great deal for a little more knowledge. Could they have guessed in what direction the boys were, they would have gone at once in search of them; as it was, there was nothing for it but to return home and wait, still in the hope that the morning would bring some further news of the missing ones.

It was but little sleep that Millicent got that night. She felt very anxious about Arnold; he was not very strong, though well and healthy in a general way, and she knew that any sudden shock and exposure such as he had gone through might easily prove very serious to him. It was not often that she let her nervous fancies get the better of her, or that she let herself meet troubles halfway, but to-night it seemed as if she could not overcome her fears. Her strength had been giving way of late more than she was aware of, and she was not so able to bear anxiety as she had been. Hour after hour she paced up and down her room wishing and longing for the morning, and not till the day began to dawn did she lie down and try to snatch an hour of feverish sleep.

All this watching and waiting and anxious suspense did not fit either Mr. Grey or Millicent for the duties and services of Sunday; but restless as the night had been, the morning found them each in their place at the usual time.

Poor Ida was very unhappy about her brothers. Mrs. Gascoigne had not known of the trouble and

anxiety the previous night, they had kept it from her, but she had to be told in the morning. And though Mr. Gascoigne broke it to her as gently as possible, and though he was able to assure her that the worst was past, and that the boys were safe, still the very thought of what might have been threw her into a violent fit of hysterics. Ida's touch soothed her, and Ida's gentle voice comforted her more than any other; and if she attempted to move away, Mrs. Gascoigne clung to her as if she could not fear to let her leave her. It was inexpressibly sweet to Ida to be so valued by the mother whom she had once thought did not care for her; but Ida was more of a comfort to her mother than Martin now; and as she stood bending over her for an hour or more there was deep down in her heart a glad feeling of thankfulness that she had ever known and loved Millicent Grey.

Mr. Grey was down on the shore again before breakfast, but there was nothing more to be learnt. The storm had passed away, and the sea looked quiet and smiling and pleasant, as if it had never held any precious thing in its bosom and played with it as a thing of nought.

But after breakfast there came further tidings. Will Martin had arrived at home, and he came up to the vicarage with news. Eldridge and the two boys were too exhausted to move yet, but they were all safe.

Mr. Grey heard thus far, and then he took the young man into the drawing-room that Millicent and the rest might hear. All the children were there, and Martin's tale was listened to with breathless interest. It appeared from what he said that Dick Eldridge and Basil had gone on rowing, and trying to pull the boat towards the shore so long as their strength would hold out; the water dashed over them and drenched them, and there was danger every minute that the boat would fill and sink. At last they were obliged to give in, and let it drift whither it would, at the mercy of the winds and waves. For a few minutes it rode safely on the top of one wave and down in the hollow of another, and then one stronger than the rest dashed against it and overturned it, and the four boys were plunged into the water.

Dick managed to keep hold of the boat, and for a while they all clung to it; but the darkness of night was rapidly coming on, there was no light anywhere near them, and they had not the slightest idea whereabouts they were. Their hands, too, became numb with the coldness of the water. So at last Dick declared he could stand it no longer; he was a good swimmer, and he should make for the shore; and when he reached it, he would send some one to help the others.

In vain Arnold, who was almost dead with fatigue and fright, clung to him and implored him not to leave them; Dick roughly shook him off, exclaiming that each one must look out for himself; so long as they kept to the boat they would be all right. And without another word he let go his hold and swam off, and was lost in the darkness.

The other three could not swim, and there they were left in as pitiful a plight as ever boys were, without help of any sort. Their only hope was, as Dick had said, to cling to the boat; and that they did with a sort of desperate energy, till they were almost sick and fainting with despair.

At last, when they had quite given up all hope, came borne on the wind a cheery "Boat ahoy!"

Only two voices answered it with a quick, eager "Here, here."

Arnold had become unconscious, and had gradually relaxed his hold, and if Basil had not discovered it, and seized his arm with his disengaged hand, he would have drifted away from them, and been seen no more. But help had come only just in time, he could hardly have held him a minute longer.

All this Martin said they had gathered by degrees from the boys. When found they were all too exhausted to speak much. He and Eldridge had had the greatest difficulty in reaching them. They had kept their boat well under the shelter of the cliffs as they rowed upward; but even then it had been hard work, and two or three times their boat was within an inch of being sunk by the waves. Eldridge laboured at the oars, while Martin baled out the water as it dashed over them. Had the boat the boys were in not been a better and stronger one than theirs, he was sure there could not have been the slightest chance of saving them.

At last their frequent shouts received a most welcome if feeble answer. As far as their eyes, accustomed to the darkness, could judge, the boat was almost close to the rock that Basil and Ernest had christened St. Hilda's Isle, but try as they would they could not come near the boys. The waves dashed their boat hither and thither with as little ceremony as they would have done a feather, and so Eldridge, at the risk of his life, left his own boat, and swam to the other, and brought the boys one by one in safety to the dry land of St. Hilda's Isle.

Martin said he never expected to see any of them alive again. No one but Eldridge could possibly have done it; he was the best swimmer in all Rothwell, but his strength was almost spent when the last of the three boys was laid on the grass on the top of the island. But though safe from the perils of the ocean, they were still at the mercy of the wind and weather; there was no shelter on the bare and barren rock, nothing but the cave that Basil had discovered, and it was some time before he was in a condition to show them the way to it.

As soon as ever it was possible to do so—when the tide was low enough to cross over the rocky way that connected the island with the mainland, the way that had once so frightened little Johnnie Grey—Martin left them to try and obtain some assistance; and it was then that he succeeded in

sending the hasty note that had partially relieved Mr. Grey's anxieties.

Some people in a cottage near had been very good to them, and at last, after much trouble, they got the poor exhausted boys to bed there. Then, and not till then, Eldridge gave way. He had been using his strength to the utmost, Martin said; but at last, strong man as he was, he fainted dead away, and he and Arnold lay unconscious for an hour or two. But they were all doing well now, and hoped to get home later in the day; and Martin was commissioned to take a trap of some sort to fetch them.

Such was the story that Martin told to eager listening ears, and deep thankfulness arose in their hearts that their dear ones were spared, and were likely to be restored to them again.

But nothing had been seen or heard of Dick, and whether he was saved or drowned Martin could not tell, but he feared the latter was the most likely; his father was in terrible suspense about him.

Millicent managed to get through her share of the services of the day, though she was far from well. She took her place at the organ as usual. But the beautiful words of the psalm came home to her; it was so singularly appropriate, and Mr. Grey read it in a voice full of feeling:—

"At His word the stormy wind ariseth, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep; their soul melteth away because of the trouble. So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, He delivereth them out of their distress. For He maketh the storm to cease, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they are at rest, and so He bringeth them unto the haven where they would be. Oh that men would therefore praise the Lord for His goodness, and declare the wonders that He doeth for the children of men!"

There was hardly a dry eye in the church, for all knew the circumstances, and the feeling of suspense and consequent relief had run through the whole village; and as for Millicent, she was fain to cover her face with her hands and weep silently for a few minutes. She went to her class of little girls in the afternoon, and spoke to them seriously and solemnly; and when she came back the boys had arrived, looking pale and somewhat shaken; but on the whole not much the worse for their expedition.

It was by their own particular desire that they were all three at church in the evening, and grateful thanks arose from many hearts over the pale faces and young bowed heads in the beautiful words of our General Thanksgiving,—"Particularly to those who desire now to offer up their praises and thanksgivings for the late mercies vouchsafed unto them."

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## Chapter XXI.—The Trouble over.

Anxious hearts and anxious faces abounded in Rothwell that Saturday evening, for it seemed such a sad fate for those young and careless boys rushing wilfully, as it were, to almost certain death; for none amongst the old experienced fishermen ever expected to see them more.

It was a sad time for poor little Rose Eldridge, left at home with no one but her young sisters. At first she had not known where her father had gone, and expected him home at the usual time; but when that was long past, and neither he nor Dick appeared, she began to grow uneasy, and ran into a neighbour's cottage for sympathy and comfort. Then she learnt the whole of the news—told with not so much gentleness and consideration as might have been—that the boys were out, and that her father had gone in search of them, and none of them were expected to return alive.

Rose was stunned at the suddenness of the tidings; she stood quite still for a few minutes, and then she went back to her own home without saying a word. Quickly and tremblingly she undressed Annie and Jennie and put them to bed, and then she knelt down all by herself in the little kitchen, and with choking sobs prayed that God would save her father and Dick and bring them home again.

She was just opening the house door to rush down to the shore, when she almost fell into the motherly arms of old Mrs. Sheldon on the threshold. The old woman had had children of her own in days gone by, and she knew how to be tender and gentle with the young things, especially when the first touch of the world's sorrow came upon their heads.

She folded her arms round Rose and kissed her before she spoke.

"Oh, my poor lamb! you mustn't rush out in this fashion at this time of night. Be content, Rosie. If anything could have been done, it would have been done long since."

"I want father!" wailed Rose; "and mother is not here."

And then she burst into a storm of crying. She was but a child, and could not be expected to control herself. Mrs. Sheldon knew it was the best thing she could do, and did not try to check her, only soothed her gently and tenderly as her mother might have done. At last when her sobbing had ceased the good woman persuaded her to go bed, she could do nothing to help her father when strong and active men were powerless.

And yet there was one thing Rose could do, that which is open alike to the weak and the strong. Before she lay down she knelt by the side of her little bed, and once more in broken words asked God to take care of her dear father. Ah! even the prayer of a child can reach the loving ears that are always open.

Mrs. Sheldon said nothing, but stood and watched her with moist eyes. It was many a long

year since her lips had uttered a prayer; but the sight had carried her back to the time when she was just such another little one, kneeling by her mother's knee morning and evening to repeat her "Our Father." She stayed by Rose until she fell asleep, and then stole away softly, closing the door after her, intending to be with her again before she woke in the morning.

But Rose was awakened betimes, and not by Mrs. Sheldon.

It was just beginning to be light when a slight sound startled her; she sprang up, wide awake in a moment. There it was again; first a gentle shaking of the door latch, and then a tiny pebble or two thrown up against her window. She hurried on her clothes, her hands trembling so that she could hardly fasten the buttons and strings. It must be father, and he had come home alive and safe, she kept saying to herself.

But when she ran down and opened the door, she stood surprised and disappointed, for there was only Dick,—Dick, looking very wet and very miserable.

"Let me in, Rose," for she stood with the door in her hand, not offering to move. "I am almost done for, but I shall be all right soon; and father need not know anything about it."

"Oh, Dick! why has not father come with you? where is he? What has happened? do tell me all about it."

But Dick pushed past her and sat himself down in his father's arm-chair, and leaned his head on his hand.

"I say, Rose," he exclaimed, impatiently, "don't stand staring there! can't you get me something to eat and drink? where's the use of getting up if you won't do anything?"

Rose fetched the bread and butter out of the pantry, and brought out a jug of milk and set it before him: the fire was not lighted yet, so she could not make any tea. Dick eagerly devoured what was set before him; and Rose stood at his side, waiting with what patience she could until he was willing to attend to her. At last, when his hunger was somewhat satisfied, she put her hand on his shoulder.

"And now, Dick," she said, pleadingly, "will you please tell me what has become of father?"

Dick looked up, surprised in his turn.

"I know nothing about him. If he isn't in bed I should think he has gone off early to work."

Then Rose explained all about it. It was not an unusual thing for John Eldridge to be out all night fishing, but never on such a stormy night as the previous one had been.

"If you have never seen anything of him, where can he be?" Rose asked, with terror in her eyes and voice. "Oh, Dick, perhaps he is drowned!"

"Nonsense, Rose! I dare say he never went after us at all. At any rate, you may be sure he is safe somewhere."

"Perhaps as you and the Master Gascoignes have escaped, there may be a chance for him too," said Rose, wistfully.

"Don't bother!" exclaimed Dick, roughly, "it is all right. As for me, I'm dead tired, I shall go to bed."

And he did not tell her that he had left his companions to their fate, and escaped with difficulty himself. But when Dick lay down his mind was too uneasy to allow him to sleep. He could not help blaming himself greatly for what he had done. What if the death of those three boys, and above all his father, should lie at his door!

By and by Mrs. Sheldon came to see after Rose, and she brought the welcome news that all were safe.

"I should have come and told you last night, my dear, but I hoped you were asleep, and I did not want to disturb you. And I meant to be here before you were awake this morning, but you are earlier than I expected."

"Dick had come back," Rose said, "that was the reason."

Then, later in the day, Rose heard Will Martin's tale. Martin was loud in his complaints against Dick for his behaviour; but Dick was in bed still, so he did not hear them. Then came Eldridge himself, weak and weary and exhausted; and I need not tell you how glad and thankful Rose was to have him safe home again.

Towards tea-time Dick stole down into the kitchen, looking a good deal ashamed of himself, for he knew he had done a mean and cowardly trick. But his father did not scold him; he only asked the lad how he got home. And Dick answered hesitatingly, yet with a sullen manner,—

"I could not stay there to be drowned, father, so I did the best for myself that I could; but I was swimming about for an hour or two before I could reach the shore, and then I ran on home, and woke up Rose as early as I dared."

"And what if those young gentlemen had been drowned? what then, Dick?"

"They haven't though!" retorted Dick, with a half-scornful laugh; "I dare say we weren't in half the danger that we thought ourselves. Besides, if they had, it would not have been my fault."

"You took them, and you left them," said Eldridge, gravely, "and it is a wonderful thing that we are any of us back alive. I am half inclined to think that what Mr. Grey said was true," he added, in a low, solemn tone, "that God's eye was over us all, and that He brought us through, else it would never have been."

"Oh yes, father, He did!" exclaimed Rose, in an earnest, eager voice, slipping her hand into her father's as she spoke. "Why, I asked Him, and I know Mr. Grey did; and God does listen, and He brought you safe home."

Eldridge did not answer; but the fact that the loving Father in heaven hears and answers His children's cry on earth came powerfully to his heart.

As for Dick, he turned away and said nothing; such things were beyond his understanding. His father had gone out in another boat and saved the boys; that was the plain English of the whole thing, he did not see why there need be so much fuss made about it.

Two days afterwards, when John Eldridge was sitting on the little bench just outside his door smoking his pipe after his dinner, the garden gate swung to, and Mr. Gascoigne came up the narrow path. Eldridge had not seen him since that day when they had the talk about the cottage, and that conversation came into his mind directly, as he got up to return the squire's greeting. John expected that he had come to tell him to be out sooner than the month he had given him.

But that was not Mr. Gascoigne's errand. He went into the house when John asked him, and sitting down, began to chat in a kind and familiar manner, and noticed the children, especially Rose. At last he said,—

"I have never thanked you, my friend, for what you did; but it is not that I do not feel your having risked your life to save my dear one. Words are powerless in such a case; deeds will, I hope, do better."

And as he spoke Mr. Gascoigne took from his pocket a roll of paper, and put it into Eldridge's hand. John opened it and looked at it, but the lines danced before his eyes so that he could not read a word of it. He looked to Mr. Gascoigne for some explanation. It was soon given.

"You and I had a little difference of opinion the last time we met. Perhaps I claimed more than I ought to have done; however, that will set the matter right. No one can claim your little homestead again; for the paper you hold in your hand gives this cottage to you and your children for ever."

It was even so. The paper was the title-deed of the cottage and garden, and a small portion of the field behind it. It was John Eldridge's own now, no one could take it from him.

It was a little time before he could understand it; but when he did the tears came into his eyes, and grasping Mr. Gascoigne's hand he tried to utter his thanks.

"Instead of spoiling the view," the squire said, "I shall consider your cottage as the prettiest thing to be seen from the windows of the Hall, for when I look at it I shall remember, and I hope my boys will after me, that Basil and Ernest owe their lives to you."

Rose was ready to dance for joy when Mr. Gascoigne had gone. She had not trusted in vain. God had heard and answered her prayer. She had asked that they might still live in their own dear home, and lo! it had been made their own altogether.

Yes, dear reader, it is often so. God gives *more than we desire* or deserve, more than we can *ask or think. Shall* we not trust Him for every*thing we need?*

# OTTO THE ORPHAN BOY.

By M. Betham-Edwards.

## Chapter III.—How Otto was quarrelled over.

You may imagine that our little prince and princess found this new toy an embarrassing one upon occasions. The princess their mother had made over the little foundling to them on express conditions that they were to take as much care of of it, and feel as responsible for it as for their pet birds, kittens, and puppies; and though of course Otto had his nurse and his nursery just like a child of the home, he belonged to Eugene and Gertrude, and to nobody else. Every week a certain portion of their pocket-money was deducted for his maintenance, and out of every present of books or toys that came from aunts and god-parents far away, a third was retained for Otto's use by and by. So if Eugene wanted to buy a new set of garden tools, or Gertrude a new doll, they had to wait much longer than usual, which, after the first novelty was worn off, became a little irksome. Still neither of the children uttered a word of regret, for they knew well enough that if Otto was wished away, off Otto would go.

And thus it *was* very difficult to settle what should be done with him when he grew older. Whilst he continued in the pleasantly neutral state, living for the most part in his own domain of the nursery, and not in any way interfering with their plans of life, education, or convenience, all was easy enough. But by and by when Gertrude should be grown up, and wear a train, and assist at court festivals like other princesses, and Eugene should have gone off to the wars—for of course he was to be a soldier; and as he had no kingdom to rule over, he had made up his mind long ago to be a valiant knight in the service of his uncle the King of Pumperkinckel—what was to become of Otto?

"He shall enter my regiment, and be a loyal servant of my uncle the king too," Eugene said one day as they mooted the difficult subject. "Could a better fate happen to him than to fight, and perhaps lose his life in a good cause?"

"He is as much my child as yours," Gertrude said, stoutly, "and he shall never go to the wars with my consent. There are plenty of good causes to be fought without going to the wars, mamma says, and she always cries when you talk in this way, because our poor uncle Fritz was killed in a battle. Let us make a painter of him, then he can paint our portraits and lead a quiet life."

"You know nothing about boys and their ways, Gertrude. He is sure to tire of home and want to see the world. Why, he screams and kicks now like mad when he wants to go out in his little carriage, and will he content himself indoors when he is grown up? Of course he will like to do as I do."

"Then you shall have him altogether," Gertrude said, "I will have nothing to do with soldiers."

"No, you keep Otto, my half of him and all," Eugene said in a temper; "you always disapprove of my plans, and I shall soon be going to a military school, and I really think he has been more trouble to us than he is worth. We are always quarrelling about him."

Just then they heard a merry baby-laugh in the adjoining room, and Gertrude flew to the door. There was Otto just waking from his noonday sleep, and turning from his nurse as she entered he held out his arms to Gertrude, smiling joyfully. He was now just a year old, and had blue eyes, light curls, and cheeks pale as a rose.

"The sweet, precious, innocent thing!" cried Gertrude, bending over him with tenderest affection, "I would not give him up for anything else I possess. See how he loves us both, Eugene."

And certainly Otto showed as much pleasure as it was possible for such a mite to do, clutching at Gertrude's hair, blowing kisses at Eugene, and growing quite excited in his desire to be demonstrative and loving.

"How much fonder he is of us than we deserve!" Gertrude cried, hugging him close.

"He is a nice little thing enough, I am very fond of him, very," said Eugene, patronizingly, "but you must admit, Gerty, that he is a great trouble and no little responsibility. You shall have him altogether as you are so anxious, whilst you shall give me in exchange your little Indian palanquin."

"As if you were not worth fifty palanquins," Gertrude said, kissing the unconscious Otto, "yes, Eugene, if mamma permits, it is a bargain, and I will be Otto's father and mother both. Let us run to mamma and ask her at once."

The princess heard what the children had to say very attentively, and when each had spoken, answered with a grave face, though it was easy to see that she was smiling inwardly.

"No, Eugene. I think it would be dishonest of you to back out of your bargain now, good or bad as you may consider it. You took Otto for better or worse, and I am sure he has done nothing to deserve such changed conduct on your part. By and by when he is old enough to be disagreeable and contrary, as you are sometimes"—this was said with a reproachful smile—"then I will release you from your compact, and Gertrude and I will undertake the sole charge. So for the present try to make the best of it, and to resign yourself to the possession of half of this little boy instead of the Indian palanquin."

Thus the matter was settled, and after this little quarrel, the brother and sister worked harmoniously together for some time to come. Otto, you see, was too young as yet to take any but a neutral part in the discussion held concerning him, but by and by the princess said he was to have a share in deciding his own destiny. Neither Gertrude nor Eugene should choose his career in life, but he himself should be the umpire. The little thing was a great pet during the next two or three years. He was so joyous, so lively, and so fond that it was impossible not to love him, and his gay spirits seemed to thank them for their kind care. Nothing went wrong with the little foundling in these early days; his teething was soon over, he did not mind whooping-cough in the least, measles were a trifle, and if he fell downstairs, or ate poison berries, or swallowed pins and needles, he was soon all right again.

It was a very happy life these children led in their solitary castle beside this beautiful river Rhine. Few boys and girls lived in so retired a fashion as this little prince and princess,—who yet, for aught any one knew, might be a king and queen one day. Quiet rambles with tutor and governess, an excursion in the summer holidays to Switzerland or to the Black Forest, Christmas festivities, and name-day celebrations on a quiet scale,—of these was one year after another made up till Otto could read words of one syllable. Eugene was preparing for the university at a public school; and Gertrude, no longer a quaint little girl in short frock and pig-tails, was a tall young lady of fourteen, learning music, drawing, and half a dozen languages from various masters and mistresses.

Poor little Otto was somewhat thrown in the background by the change, but flourished amazingly.

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## Chapter IV.—How Otto determined to seek his Fortune.

Still Otto was by no means neglected. Gertrude having now to practise on the pianoforte two hours a day, take lessons in flower-painting from one teacher, in perspective from another, in Latin from a third,—having, in fact, her whole day divided among these instructors, could no longer teach Otto as she used to do, and only saw him at odd times. But every day Otto was taught, and every day Otto was made happy. He loved Gertrude better than any one in the world, and he adored Eugene when Eugene came home for the holidays, loving and adoring none the less because there were necessarily neglectful of him now. Gertrude would buy him toys and sweetmeats, and tell him stories in the twilight, and Eugene would teach him to ride and fish, and play boys' games; neither the one nor the other in their hearts changed towards their little foundling, only both were too busy and too much occupied with other things to think of him as they used to do.

And Otto, who was naturally as joyous as a child could be, and had been too affectionately cared for ever to feel the want of father and mother as yet, could not help a sense of loneliness stealing over him now and then. The princess had forbade all the members of her household on pain of her severest displeasure even to talk to Otto of his history or parentage, and his questions were always met by

the answer that some day or other he should know all; but the child seemed to have come to an understanding by himself. As he grew older he used to love to be alone, and would start out by himself, and sit for hours in some solitary spot pondering over these things. How strange it was that whilst Gertrude and Eugene had uncles and aunts and cousins by the score, he should have not only neither father nor mother, but not a single relative in the world: the thought did not make him quite unhappy; it only puzzled him a good deal. He often loved to fancy what his real father and mother had been like—for he supposed them dead—and what kind of life he should have led with them. He was very happy, the princess and her children, the young prince and princess, were very kind, but he could not help sometimes envying the little barefooted peasants as they passed by, clinging to the skirt or coat of father and mother. He thought it must be better to have father and mother than any treasures the world could give; and he could not understand why it was that this sad lot of orphandom should have fallen to him, to poor little Otto, more than any-one else.

As the boy grew older, of course he perceived the great difference of rank between himself and his kind protectors. Could there be indeed a greater difference than between a little foundling and a young prince and princess? Considerate and kind as they were, he no longer treated them with the affectionate familiarity of early childhood. They were now his young master and mistress rather than his playmates, and though he would have laid down his life for their sakes, he could never throw down the wall that now divided them. Now a lad may possess neither father nor mother, nor rank, nor money, nor even a name, and yet not be wanting in a proud spirit; and such a lad was Otto. When he had pondered on these things for many a day, and had come to see exactly how matters stood with regard to his position toward his friends and the world, then he determined what he should do. He would not accept the bounty hitherto so liberally afforded him, but must go out into the world to make his way like a man. He could read, write, and do sums very well for a boy of his age, and had also learned to play the pianoforte, and draw a little. He was strong, tall, and active, and if Otto could not make his way in the world, who could?

So one day he summoned courage enough to speak out to his kind mistress, and in spite of her remonstrances gained his point. The young prince and princess were away which made departure much easier, though hard enough to bear when the time came.

Otto never forgot that morning as long as he lived. It was a bright pearly day in May; the birds were singing in the park, the air was scented with roses and honeysuckles, below the green heights lay *lay the* beautiful river, shining and sparkling as if *with a thousand diamonds.* What a fair world it *was, and how good God* had been to him! There was no fear or dismay in his heart as he thought of the uncertain future before him, only trust and faith and aspiration. Still, when he recollected that he was leaving his childhood's home, and his best friends he had, copious tears streamed down his cheeks, and perhaps for a moment he was sorry at his resolve. But he would do something to show the princess and his foster-brother and sister that this goodness and love had been well bestowed. He would lead an honest, pure, and single-hearted life, and some day or other let them know how it fared with him. There was a little chapel attached to the castle, where every Sunday the princess and her family attended service, and thither Otto betook himself now to pray for the last time.

The door stood open, and the rays of the morning sun penetrating the painted windows made a rainbow light before the altar. Otto entered, and kneeling reverently, he asked a blessing on the heads of his friends and protectors. Then, having prayed long and earnestly that he might be led in the path of honour and duty, he returned to the castle to make his adieux.

At last they were over; he had kissed the princesses' hands with renewed expressions of devotion and gratitude, had embraced every member of her household, and received parting gifts from all, had wept, smiled, and said, *Lebewoh*—Farewell—a hundred times, had looked back on the stately castle with lingering looks of love and regret, till lost to sight, and was now at mid-day this bright May morning on the high road, that, as he fondly thought, was to lead to honour and fortune.

## RUST, GILDING, AND POLISH.

SOME people are *rusty.* Their harsh, ungainly manners eat out whatever is good in their own character, and saw the very flesh of those that come near them.

Some people are *gilt:* a very brilliant exterior they present; but the first brush of hard using rubs off the gilding, and reveals the base metal beneath.

A third class are *polished.* The polish, indeed, is on the surface; but it is a polish on the surface of solid worth, and in the multifarious crosses of human life, the more it is rubbed the brighter it grows. W. A.

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE

Is held at St. Katherine Cree, Leadenhall Street, on the first Sunday afternoon in the months of January, April, July, and October, at half-past three o'clock. The Editor will be glad to see any dear friends who wish to speak to him, before or after the service, next Sunday afternoon.

## EDITORIAL NOTICE.

Letters should be addressed to the Rev. DR. WHITTEMORE, 12A, Paternoster Row.

# SUNSHINE.

EDITED BY W. M. WHITTEMORE, D.D., RECTOR OF ST. KATHERINE CREE, LONDON.

No. 179. NOVEMBER, 1876. [ONE PENNY.

[THE GAMEKEEPER'S ENCOUNTER WITH THE GIPSIES.]

## LITTLE ALINE.

A STORY OF GIPSY LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PET'S DIFFICULTIES."

### CHAPTER XXXI.—THE PLEASANT SURPRISE.

IT was about seven o'clock when Ethel, with Margaret, reached her home, and a carriage, from which the coachman had just lifted a trunk which he was carrying into the hall, was at the door.

"Oh, look, Margaret! what can it be? who could have come?" exclaimed Ethel as she sprang forward, half believing, half doubting that the arrival was in some way connected with her parents' return.

Her suspense was soon ended, for she had scarcely crossed the threshold, when she was clasped in her mother's arms, and before their warm embrace was over, Mr. Raymond hastened out of the dining-room, and welcomed his little daughter with a hearty kiss.

"Why, Ethel, how you have grown!" he said, putting her from him that he might regard her more attentively. I left a little girl behind me, and I find in her stead quite a young lady!"

"No, no, papa, I am not a young lady yet, I don't want to be one; I am not a bit altered,—am I, mamma?"

"Only for the better, darling; you had not those rosy cheeks when I went away, and you look so much stouter now. Margaret has taken good care of you."

"Yes, mamma, I have been very happy at the farm."

"But not sorry to come back to us, Ethel?" asked Mr. Raymond, putting his arm fondly around her as he spoke; "I am half jealous of Margaret, lest she should have stolen our little girl's heart away from us."

"Papa is only joking, isn't he, mamma?" said Ethel. "Oh! I have so often wanted you back again! it seems such a long, long time since you went abroad."

It was a very pleasant meeting between parents and child; and it was doubly pleasant to Ethel, because she was treated so differently by her father. All his cold indifference of manner towards her had vanished, and it seemed to her as if she had suddenly slipped into dear little Charlie's place, and was sharing the endearments that used to be lavished on him. How such a change had come about she could not tell; she was perhaps too young; at all events, she was too happy to examine her own feelings; but it was so strange to her to find herself of any importance to her papa, that at first she could scarcely believe it was real.

We are in the secret, however, and can give our readers a little glimpse into Mr. Raymond's mind.

He was so ill when he left England, and for some time afterwards, that he began seriously to question whether he should ever again see his own country and his own home; and with the thought of dying, and of having to account for all his past actions, came the remembrance of his pet boy, whom he had so idolized as almost totally to neglect his little sister. It flashed across him then how unjust he had been to Ethel in repulsing her loving little efforts to win his favour, and also how ungrateful he had been towards God in refusing, because He had recalled one precious gift, to enjoy or to prize the other still left him. Like the prophet Jonah in his pride and selfishness, he had persisted in the idea that he did well to be angry. Now he plainly saw that he had been sadly to blame; and it was not long before he learnt to regard his own sickness as one of the means employed to bring him to a better state of mind. Through the blessed teaching of God's Spirit he was led to feel that he was a sinner and needed a Saviour, and when old things passed away and *all things became new*, the warm, natural affection *of a father flowed forth to his* little girl. He wondered *that he could have* been so blind as to let so fair a little flower blossom almost unnoticed in his dwelling; and the danger now was of his going to the other extreme, and of spoiling Ethel by undue fondness of her.

But Ethel was a little plant in Christ's garden, and the good Husbandman watches over such, and will not let any harm befall them.

Ethel left the farm now, and was of course the child of the Hall once more. But she was still often at the former, for Mrs. Raymond liked Faith so much that she was quite willing her little girl should continue friendly with her. It was necessary for Ethel's health that a considerable part of each day should be spent in the open air, and as Mrs. Raymond could not walk far without fatigue, and Ethel did not care to always have a servant with her, it was very convenient to have a nice girl like Faith, older than Ethel, who could be a companion to her whenever one was wanted. There was some talk about engaging a governess for Ethel, but at present it was only talk, and Ethel was glad of it; she did not fancy being taught by any one excepting her mamma or Miss Cleveland.

Ethel was never weary of hearing her mamma talk of their adventures in foreign countries, for though there was nothing remarkable about their travels, yet they were very entertaining to her, and she had plenty to tell her mamma in return of all that she had done during her absence. She had also a great deal to say about Aline and her aunt, and poor uncle Tim and his happy death.

Mrs. Raymond was much interested in Ethel's account of the gipsies, and truly thankful that her little girl had not only herself learnt to love the Saviour, but had been allowed to speak of Him in her own simple fashion to that wandering race. Her heart was full of gratitude to God for His great goodness. It had been a keen trial to her when she left home to part with Ethel, not knowing what might happen to her; and now she was restored to her in fresh health and brightness, a sunbeam in their dwelling; and moreover she had been a little missionary to Aline and her uncle.

It was such a pity, Ethel said, that Aline's friends were all away, and no prospect appearently of their return. She so wished her mamma to see Aline, and then to form some plan by which the gipsy girl might be taken from her wandering life, and trained to better and happier ways. It was Aline's own wish to leave the gipsy camp, and Ethel could not help regretting that her sudden departure had effectually hindered this wish from being carried out.

No tidings could be gained respecting Aline. Ralph had endeavoured to gain some information about his old acquaintances, but all he could ascertain was that Aline and her aunt had joined another set of gipsies who were staying in the west of England, and were likely to remain there for the present. It was said that the reason of this change was that Aline's aunt was already thinking of marrying one of the men in that encampment.

"Poor little Aline! she will be miserable, I know she will," said Ethel to her mother, "for I dare say the new uncle will be very unkind, perhaps cruel to her; and she will be forced to do whatever he pleases."

"I would not fret over troubles that I was not sure had any existence, Ethel. Aline may not be half so badly off as you fancy; and she *may* be more comfortable than she has hitherto been."

"But, mamma, those gipsies Aline and her aunt are with now are not at all a nice set; Ralph says so, and he must know. And I am afraid Aline will forget all she has learnt, and will be tempted to do wrong by bad companions."

"Do you not think, Ethel, that the Good Shepherd can take care of His little lamb without our help? We must trust Aline to His keeping, and feel satisfied that she is safe in His hands."

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## Chapter XXXII.—Aline's Trials.

Ethel was not mistaken in thinking that Aline's new home was less comfortable than her old one. The change her aunt had made was certainly not for the better. She was not yet married to Tom Boswell, but it was quite decided that he was to be her husband, and his influence over her was very strong. So that, though she was not less kind to Aline than formerly, she was not so particular about what she did or where she went; and if Aline had not stood firm, and refused to let herself be beguiled into any wrong practices, the bad girls around her would soon have led her astray. Her aunt had always laughed at her for being so precise and religious, but she had never opposed her new notions, as she called them; now, however, urged to it by Tom Boswell, she began to try to get her to give them up. She would not let Aline go to church, or read her Bible, or any good books, if she could help it; and the little Testament had to be carefully hidden, and was only peeped into when the gipsies were asleep, or when Aline could catch a few quiet minutes in some secluded spot.

Ethel and Faith would indeed have been sorry for their little friend could they have heard the abusive language that was sometimes showered upon her by her companions because she would not join them in their bad practices or their ungodly merriment. Her aunt, to do her justice, kept her well fed and decently clothed, but she would not listen to any complaint against Tom or the other gipsies.

"You'll always be teased and worried, child, if you *will* stick to those fine ways you picked up from the young lady; you d best get them out of your head as fast as you can, and make up your mind to live as the rest of us does. What's good enough for us is good enough for you, I reckon; and you'll have hard lines of it if you sets yourself up to teach your betters. Take my advice, Aline, and don't try to be what you isn't; getting everybody's ill-will, and doing no good for yourself either. You can't do what's wrong, do you say? Well, who wants you to? Only remember what would be wrong for some folks isn't wrong for others, and it don't become a child like you to settle a point like that. Least said is soonest mended; and if you're wise you'll hold your tongue, and not meddle with that which doesn't concern you."

But those who know Aline will not expect that she would manifest the meekness recommended to her. She had learnt to curb the violence of her temper, and to check the angry words that were too ready to rise to her lips; she did strive, in a higher strength than her own, to return good for evil, and to be forgiving as Jesus was; but her natural disposition was blunt and outspoken, and she was blunt and outspoken still. When she saw anything going on of which her conscience disapproved she spoke plainly about it, in terms that were more indignant than prudent; and she refused to swerve a hair's breadth herself from the path which she felt to be the right one. So she had many enemies, and scarcely any friends besides her aunt, in her new quarters.

The little children liked her because she was kind to them, and played with them, and her handy ways and general cleverness made her very useful in the community; but boys and girls of her own age shunned her because her life was a constant reproof to their own.

She was very lonely sometimes, and longed for the old days when Ralph was at her side to befriend her in every difficulty, or for the happy hours she had passed at the farm, learning lessons from Faith and Miss Ethel. She resolved that if she were ever again in that neighbourhood she would not rest until she was freed from a mode of life that was now irksome to her, and it was the hope of at length escaping from it that helped her to bear it patiently for awhile.

Affairs seemed to grow worse and worse, and Aline felt as if she must run away somewhere from the daily persecution she met with, when all at once a change occurred which put her in good spirits.

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## Chapter XXXIII.—The Poachers.

There was a great bustle and commotion in the camp one morning, and Aline heard from her aunt that orders had been given to move onwards. Two or three of the elder gipsies were the leaders of the res, and they had agreed that for business reasons it was advisable to proceed towards the south. Aline was glad to pack up and depart, for she was tired of the place in which they now were; and she understood that they were going near, if not exactly into, the neighbourhood of the Hill Farm, where she would have an opportunity of seeing her kind friends.

They halted about five miles from their old haunts, and then there was a division of their number, the greater part setting off again on their travels, and a few, amongst whom were Aline and her aunt, staying behind with one or two of the tents.

Why this separation was made Aline could not exactly tell. The reason given was that it was better for Aline's aunt to remain at Springfield, the situation being more sheltered, the air much warmer, and she had taken cold and was rather out of sorts; but Aline suspected that other motives were at work. Perhaps there had been some disagreement between her and Tom Boswell, or perhaps some project was in hand, of which she was intended to be ignorant. However, Aline did not trouble herself much about the matter; she could find some means of communication with the Farm, and if not, five miles was not a distance to frighten one so fleet of foot as the little gipsy girl.

For a week or two all went on quietly, and then Aline learnt that their people at Green Hollow were accused of poaching on Mr. Raymond's grounds, and that he was very angry with them, and threatened to prosecute them. Aline's aunt was vexed that her intended husband should run any risk of that sort, but as was perhaps only natural, she defended his doings, and said that if a hare or a pheasant ran across your path there was no harm in catching it for dinner, when the land was overrun with them.

"Oh, yes, Aline, of course you thinks it wicked, and that they've no business to take what God Almighty has made free for everybody; your head's so turned with the notice of your fine friends, that you'd be ready to believe black was white if they told you so."

It was of no use for Aline to argue the point with her aunt; all she could say did not make the least impression, so she was generally silent; but she was sorry that her aunt should care for a man like Tom Boswell, who though handsome-looking, and clever in some respects, had evidently no good principles to guide him.

At length one morning the country around was startled by a report that an encounter had occurred between the gipsy poachers and Mr. Raymond's gamekeeper. In the struggle between them the gamekeeper had been dangerously if not mortally wounded, and Tom Boswell was said to be the one who had fired the fatal shot. He was taken into custody, and would be tried before the magistrates for the crime that was laid to his charge.

There was great excitement among all the gipsies, you may be sure, and Aline's aunt went off immediately to see and to condole with Tom Boswell. She would not let Aline go with her; and on second thoughts Aline was content to be left behind, for she hardly liked to call at the farm, or to ask her to speak to Miss Ethel, when her own people were lying under so serious an accusation. The farmer and his wife, kind as they had been in the past, might shrink from her now as one of the gipsy race, and Aline was proud, and could not bear to be looked down upon or despised.

Happily the gamekeeper's life was spared. He suffered dreadfully from his wounds, and would always feel the effect of them; but he did not die, and that was a good thing for Tom Boswell, as it lightened the sentence passed upon him. Twelve months' imprisonment was the punishment for his misdeed. It was perhaps harder for a gipsy than for any other man to be deprived of his liberty, but Tom knew what the law was when he set about breaking it; and he knew what the consequences would be if he were found out; so having acted with his eyes open he was not so much to be pitied as if he had erred through ignorance.

But when his fate was settled the resentment of the gipsies was very great. They said he was most unjustly and shamefully treated; and their anger was especially directed against Mr. Raymond because he was one of the bench of magistrates; and as it was his gamekeeper that had been meddled with, he was supposed to have urged this harsh measure against Tom Boswell.

And in truth Mr. Raymond was not disposed to be very lenient. The gipsies had always been allowed many privileges on his estate, and small depredations had been winked at; but Mr. Raymond was very strict in some of his ideas, and he had a great abhorrence of poaching, and he thought that a little timely severity in these cases was the best way of stopping it.

Threats of vengeance, and muttered predictions of evil that would come upon him, were freely uttered by the gipsies and reached his ear; but he only smiled when he heard them, and said it was a pity they had brought this trouble on themselves.

In a day or two the disturbance seemed to have blown over, and one morning when the villagers arose as usual a few smouldering embers were all that was left of the little gipsy camp. Tents and vans had vanished during the night, and their departure caused a general feeling of relief. Yet it was supposed that some of them still lingered in the neighbourhood, as Madge Lee and her husband, both forbidding-looking gipsies, had been seen once or twice.

Ethel was sadly grieved at the whole affair. Through Aline and poor uncle Tim she had become so interested in the gipsies that she had hoped as she grew older to do a great deal for them. But now she was afraid that her papa and mamma would be so prejudiced against them as to forbid this, and they would probably even disapprove of her little plan for Aline's benefit. She had not been able to hear anything about Aline or her aunt. She knew they were not with these gipsies. Ralph had assured her of that, but even he had not been able to find out where they really were. Oh, how thankful Ethel was that they had not been in any way mixed up with this poaching business! Still she very much wished that she could gain some

tidings of them. She little imagined that at that moment they were within a few miles of her.

Faith and she were walking in the early morning to a little cottage that lay rather in the direction of the Green Hollow. A poor widow with an only child in the last stage of consumption had come to live with Ben Hurst and his wife. Ben worked at the farm; and when Margaret learnt from him how destitute the widow and her boy were of the common necessaries of life, her kind heart prompted her to do all that she could for their relief. She had been herself to visit them, and now Faith was going to see them, and to carry nourishing food for the little invalid; and Ethel, who was spending a long day at the farm, offered to accompany her.

As they neared the turning that led to Green Hollow, Faith discovered that she had forgotten to bring a book that Ethel had bought for the child, and out of which she had promised to read him a chapter.

"I will run back for it, if you do not mind waiting a bit; I shall not be long," said Faith.

"No, I do not mind in the least," said Ethel, "I will sit down under this tree till you come back."

So Faith went up the hill to the farm, and Ethel threw herself on the grass at the foot of the tree.

But she had not sat more than two minutes when a gipsy woman, the same that had once so startled Faith, suddenly appeared before her.

## SCOBIE.

### Part Second.

Again in the early spring-time Scobie had another litter of kittens. These were all drowned, and with strange inconsistency she mourned her family, roaming aimlessly about, and mewing piteously, as if in anger at her mistress. She absented herself from the drawing-room, and took up her abode in the kitchen; there on a soft mat she lay beside the oven.

One day Martin came into the kitchen, bearing a tiny lamb in his arms. It had been given to him by a neighbouring farmer. It was one of three, and so feeble there seemed little chance of rearing it. Martin finding the mat vacant, laid it down there, and the cook, tying a piece of wash-leather on the spout of a teapot, got some milk warmed to try and feed it. While doing so Scobie returned mewing; she had been searching for her drowned kittens. She walked round and round the lamb, which was bleating faintly, smelling it and purring, her tail erect and amiably disposed—not whisking from side to side in anger, but simply and amiably erect. The lamb seemed to understand that it had a friend near, it raised its feeble head, followed Scobie's motions inquiringly, and bleated. At last Scobie stopped, and lying down drew the lamb's head to her comely breast and licked it. What was the cook's surprise to see the lamb drawing nourishment from the cat, and the cat evidently pleased with its strange nursling!

This condition of things continued for three days, during which time Scobie proved the most faithful and attentive of nurses; then the poor little lamb died; the cat's milk not being its natural food, had killed it. Sheep feed on grass, and are called graminivorous; but cats, though they like milk, subsist principally on flesh, and are therefore called carnivorous. When the lamb was taken away, Scobie showed the greatest concern, and it was some time before she settled down into her usual daily habits. Busy during these days showed her the greatest attention. It was most amusing to watch her antics, when at the lapse of a week Scobie returned to her lair on the rug. She licked her all over, executed somersaults over her recumbent body, yelped with delight, pulled her by the legs, and at last fairly shook her, to all of which rather demonstrative affection Scobie placidly submitted, as if aware that it proceeded from affection.

It happened next year that some improvements, which required the presence of masons and other workmen, were being made in the cottage, and before they were finished Scobie had another litter of kittens, but disturbed by the noise of the workmen she did not make her nest, as she had done before, in some secret drawer or corner, in the mistress's bedroom. She trusted her family to her friend Jess. One morning Martin found her lying in a corner of the manger, under Jess's very nose, four little black kittens beside her. Now Martin had a mortal antipathy to cats in general. It had only been the special beauty of Scobie and her winning ways that had brought him first to tolerate her; then, as if he could not help it, to love her almost as well as Jess herself. Busy, Martin could not endure. She ran over the beds in the garden, and when ordered home assaulted his heels: she chased the birds, yelping and barking, as he said, enough to deafen a body, and she had no persistence in hunting for rats or mice. If either came in her way she would prove herself worthy of her mother, and kill in a scientific way, but she had not the patience to lie in wait or scratch at a hole. She was decidedly volatile; a sparrow would distract her attention, and she would leave the most tempting promise of real sport to rush over the beds in pursuit of a bird, safely perched, by the time she had made one or two springs, on a twig far beyond its pursuer's malice.

Busy had many sterling qualities, and for these and her affection she was loved, but it must be owned she had also some very irritating ones. She came in with dirty feet, marking the clean hall, and often jumping up on the chairs or sofa. Quite well she knew she was doing wrong, for at the words, "Now, Busy, just look at the mess you have made," she would run under cover at once, nor emerge until she thought her mistress

had forgotten all about it, and this she knew from her face, for Busy could read faces better far than many wise people. Sometimes though she got a few smart cuts from a little whip kept for the purpose, and the first peep of this dreaded instrument elicited the most doleful howls, which often had the desired effect of moving her mistress's compassion, and warding off the dreaded chastisement. When the whip was returned to its place, then Busy would career round and round the room in frantic delight, turning over and over at her mistress's feet, and licking her shoes.

One other part we must notice of Busy before we return to Scobie and her kittens. At cats, omnibuses—every kind of vehicle, in fact, she would charge head down in such furious haste that often her nose would be caught in the ground, and she would be tumbled over in the mire. This was very dangerous truly, for in her fury she would often get lost among the wheels and horses' feet. at the risk of being demolished on the spot. For this habit she had been severely flogged times without number, and often she would pause at a tempting carriage in the distance, look into her mistress's face to see if she was observing her, and according to what she saw there, charge or let the carriage pass unconcernedly.

When Martin saw the kittens, remembering that the last litter had been disposed of in the stable bucket, he determined to do the same to this, so in a few minutes the warm little soft moving black kittens were cold, wet, limp, and motionless, and with special regard to a vine in the conservatory he buried them at its roots, and straightway forgot all about them.

Not so Scobie; she took the destruction of her family terribly to heart, and roamed about the stables and through the house mewing disconsolately. With some dim memory, too, of her last year's foster-child she sought the kitchen, looking up in the cook's face, her tail erect, in dumb appeal for help in her search. Nothing would pacify her, and Busy was much upset. She could not understand her friend's trouble, not having seen her kittens this time, as she had last. All day Scobie wandered about the house and precincts, not coming in at night.

Next morning, to his great surprise, Martin found her in the same place in the manger, lying contentedly purring and licking something affectionately. The loft window was open, and in and out of it there flew two starlings, crying in evident distress. They flew round and round the manger, actually alighting on Jess's head, who, as if she understood their trouble, forbore moving even her ears. On Martin's approach they flew away, twittering piteously. Peering into the manger, Martin, hardly believing his eyes, saw three little callow birds, the down only beginning to appear on their backs. They were the starlings' *nestlings. Poor* Scobie, her maternal instincts *craving strongly for some* nurslings to replace *those so ruthlessly taken* from her, had found in an old rafter across the chimney of the harness-room a starling's nest, and had appropriated its contents in a very summary fashion. There, close into her breast, lay the little callow creatures, their yellow beaks wide open, craving to be fed. Very distressed seemed Scobie that she could not prevail upon them to take nourishment from her in the ordinary manner of kittens, and as the lamb, too, had done last year. She stretched herself lovingly, she licked and licked them, but all they did was to open their beaks wider and wider, crane their necks, and then collapse exhausted.

Taking pity on their condition, Martin fed them with a little sopped bread, and afterwards brought some worms from the garden, which satisfied them. Scobie devoted herself to her strange nurslings. She became one of the sights of the neighbourhood; people could hardly believe their eyes, as they said.

Busy, too, discovering her friend's whereabouts, was most assiduous in her visits, receiving the alien family as quite according to rule, because approved of by Scobie.

The alterations being finished in the house, the masons came to the stables to do some needful repairs. These necessitated the removal of Jess for a couple of days. She was taken to a neighbouring stable. The men, however, were most careful not to disturb Scobie and her charges; they were, indeed, almost as much interested in them as Scobie herself. Every two hours during the two days they were at work in the stable they fed the birds, Martin supplying the worms. On Saturday night their job was finished, and Jess was to be brought back upon Monday. The last thing before leaving work they fed the little birds, and then the stable was closed for the night. Martin, going his rounds at ten the same night, thinking that rain threatened, fastened the loft window. Alas! only a few minutes before Scobie had gone on a little ramble on some business of her own, perhaps in search of a stray mouse, or a fledgling sparrow, for her adoption of the three callow starlings did not make her merciful to others of the feathered tribe that happened to come in her way. Searcely had Martin retired, closing for the night the hall door, when Scobie returned, and climbing up the trellis-work presented herself at the window of the loft, to find it closed.

Poor anxious Scobie! all that night she paced to and fro the walk beneath the window, mewing plaintively, now climbing anew the trellis-work among the budding creepers, now exploring the tiles, and now scratching at the stable door,—all in vain. Among the many cats making night hideous at times with their screaming, and loud banshee-like cries, who could distinguish gentle Scobie's appealing mews? Her cries were all in vain.

Sunday morning dawned in rain and wind. It was nearly nine o'clock when old Martin came to the door with the little can of worms to feed the starlings. Scobie was there, wet and miserable. For the minute Martin did not think that her piti-

able condition had been caused by a night passed without cover. When the door was opened she flew past him to her nest in the manger, Martin following with the food. There, sure enough, were the birds, their necks stretched, their beaks wide open, but cold and stiff,—they were dead. The cold night and hunger had proved too much for their fragile existence, they had died.

Scobie seemed to understand that some misfortune had befallen her adopted family. She lifted them one by one tenderly in her mouth, she laid them close to her and licked them all over, mewing sorrowfully. Then as if struck by a sudden thought she got up and went out. Martin, greatly distressed, stood lamenting over the dead "cooriosities," as he called the birds. In a short time Scobie returned, in her mouth a half-dead sparrow. This she laid before her senseless nurslings, purring over them and licking them as if to implore them to rouse themselves from the stillness she felt but could not comprehend, and eat the fresh food she had brought them.

There was great sorrow through the cottage when it became known what had happened. Everything was done to console poor Scobie.

In a few days she returned to her old mode of living, happy forgetfulness of her trouble having set in. Busy had evinced much sympathy for her friend, but it must be added much inquisitiveness also. She had examined the manger, had smelt with evident contempt, if not disgust, the dead starlings, had pulled Scobie by her neck, her tail, her shoulder, barking and yelping as if remonstrating with her over her fruitless sorrow; and when Martin at last carried away the birds to bury them she evinced her approval by accompanying him as chief mourner to the interment, and sitting down demurely watched the process. When it was over, with a little sharp farewell yelp she trotted off to tell Scobie all about it in her own fashion.

## THE BEST PRESERVATIVE.

WHO seeks for the fadeless beauty
Must seek for the use that seals
To the grace of a constant blessing
The beauty that use reveals,
For into the folded robe alone
The moth with its blighting steals.

## THE STORY OF A LONDON ORPHAN.

### SOLUTION OF THE NINETY-THIRD PICTURE STORY.

TWILIGHT was quickly deepening into night in the busy streets of London on a cold November's evening; the foot passengers were hurriedly hastening to their respective homes, some with the picture of a blazing fire and bright cheerful parlour before them, others with only that of a bare, comfortless garret, and several, alas! who had no home, no shelter for the cold night but a door-step or an archway. Under one of these archways a policeman was passing on his nightly tramp when his attention was attracted by a dark figure lying at one side; holding down his lantern, he perceived it to be a poor ragged woman stretched on the cold ground; by her side stood a little boy, dirty and ragged, whose tattered garments ill protected him from the piercing night blast, and whose face was worn and pinched with hunger. "What are you doing here?" asked the policeman, rather roughly. "Mother's gone to sleep, and I can't awake her," answered the child with a sob, "and I am so hungry and cold!" The policeman's face softened as he again bent over the woman, but he started back and glanced pityingly at the little boy as he quickly perceived that the poor woman was not asleep, but dead. How the poor child cried when he told him so! "Oh, mother! mother!" he sobbed, throwing himself down beside the lifeless corpse, "why did you leave me?" A kind-looking, well-dressed woman, who happened just then to be passing, stopped when she heard his cries, and asked the policeman what was the matter. In a few words he told her and her kindly heart felt for the little homeless orphan. "Will you come home with me?" she asked tenderly, bending over the child. Her kind tones made him look up, and something in her face made him put his little hand in hers and say "Oh, yes, you are like my mother, and she said God would take care of me." "I once had a little boy like you," said the woman "and he died, but you shall be my child instead." And as she led him to her own home she drew from him the history of his life as long as he could remember; how his mother had earned her living by sewing as long as she could, how she got weak and ill day by day, and could not do it, and how they had to leave the garret they lived in and wander about the streets till she could go no farther, and lay down in the archway to die. Such was his tale, and such is the tale of many a little street Arab. They soon reached the home which was also to be little Tom's,—for that was his name, he had told his newly found friend, Mrs. Deane.

In a short time he was seated by a bright fire, dressed in a warm suit of clothes which had belonged to Mrs. Deane's little son, which she had kept as sacred relics of him, but which she gladly put on the poor orphan she had adopted. He had had a plentiful supply of warm bread and milk, such as he had not tasted for long, and was enjoying the warm blaze, when a little girl with a bunch of flowers in her hand came into the room. She appeared to be a little younger than Tom, whom she regarded with great curiosity. She seemed at first rather shy, but the two children soon became great friends. She asked his name, and informed him that hers was Annie Dalton, that she was Mrs. Deane's niece and was now staying with her on a visit, and ended by giving him her flowers. Tom could scarcely realize his happiness; here he was suddenly brought out of poverty and misery to a happy, comfortable home and a kind mother. Mrs. Deane was comfortably off; she kept a small shop, besides taking in sewing, and in her motherly heart there was quite room enough for little Tom.

Let us pass over a few years, and when we again see Tom, he is no longer the small delicate-looking child he was when our story commenced. He is now a stout, strong boy of thirteen or fourteen, able to earn money for his "mother," as he proudly calls Mrs. Deane. He has got a situation at one of the London stations as errand-boy, and well and faithfully he does his work. But he often thinks of little Annie Dalton, and wonders if he shall ever see her again, for Annie does not live in London, but in the country, where her father is a farmer. He does not forget how in the first days after he came to his new home Annie cheered and consoled him for the loss of his mother, how she said she had gone to a happy home in heaven, where she would never more be weary and tired; and best of all, she told him the sweet story of old, which in her simple childish words quickly reached his heart.

But one day something occurred which made Tom very happy. Among the passengers who came in one of the trains he recognised his old friend Annie. She was with her father, and had come to London for a few days to see Mrs. Deane. She wasvery glad to seeTom, and it washe who carried their luggage to the place directed by Annie's father, and to his great joy she gave him a beautiful bunch of wild flowers which she had brought from the country. How those flowers were treasured by him! long after Annie left London he kept them fresh by constantly changing their water, and often he would stay for long gazing earnestly at them, and building castles in the air for the future.

Again we will pass over several years of Tom's life. He is now grown up, no longer an errand-boy, but one of the head clerks of a flourishing establishment. However, his good fortune does not make him proud; he knows that all his blessings have come from God, and does not forget that he was once a poor homeless orphan. Now let us go to the village in which little Annie lives (no longer little, though). The friendship which began between her and Tom when children has grown stronger every year, and if you ask why the church bells are ringing so merrily, you will be told that it is the wedding day of Tom Benson and Annie Dalton.

MARIE A. M. (14).

*Camp, T---lee, Ireland.*

## PICTURE STORY.

No. XCV.

HONOURABLE MENTION.—Amy M. B., Emmie C., Bessie C. M. D., Emmie E. G., Sallie B., Anemone, Lilla M. T., Emily S. W., Marian A., Lilian C. W., Lily M. W., Edith F. S., Alyce A. H. T., Catherine W. H. J., Clara T., Alice P., Annie B. M., Rénée B., Maivjane G., Elizabeth M. B., Mary C., Annie E. W., Constance F. B., Isabel B.; Jane S.; Alice B. B., Adelaide A., Jesse I.. D., Helen T., Elizabeth A. S., Susan G., Susan G., Ethel M. J., Laura C. O., Bertha C. M. S., Evelyn M. B., Agnes M. A., Florence H., Mary and Kate B., Emily and Athena I., Florence and Alice B., Frances G. S., Patty Y., Marie P., Edith A. S., Fanny M. T.; Evelyn M. W., Samuel S. S., Frederick T., Arthur T. V. B., Henry L. B., Thomson D. F. V., Robert C., Arthur L. S.

Solutions should be posted by the 8th of this month, addressed—The Rev. Dr. WHITTEMORE, 12A, Paternoster Row, London. If addressed in any other way they cannot be noticed.

We have again to thank our dear friends for photographs, flowers, and kind letters.

EDITOR.

[AGATHA IN THE TELEGRAPH OFFICE.]

## AUNT MILLICENT'S CHARGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SOLDIER HAROLD," &C.

### CHAPTER XXII.—AUNT MILLICENT'S ILLNESS.

THE Monday morning after that eventful Saturday and Sunday, Millicent was unable to leave her bed. Those hours of trying suspense, and then the reaction, had been too much for her strength, and she was obliged to lie still and rest, and leave her usual duties to others. She hoped, however, that one day's rest would make her all right again: nurse thought differently when she came in to see her, and decided in her own mind that Miss Grey was beginning in an illness of some sort. But she said nothing of what she thought then. Only as Agatha came out of her room, nurse met her on the stairs and begged her to be as quiet as possible, and to keep the boys quiet, as her aunt was not well, and was not coming down as usual.

"Auntie ill?" exclaimed Agatha, hardly believing nurse's statement; "oh, aunt Millicent is never ill."

"That is no reason why she shouldn't be," said nurse, dryly. "I am sure I often wonder she is not half distracted with all the noise there is about. It's my belief you will worry your poor aunt to death before you'll have any thought or care for her."

And with that nurse went back to her nursery and shut the door.

Agatha lingered a minute.

Should she go in and see for herself how her aunt was, and ask if she could do anything for her? But it was Arnold who ought to be ill if anybody was, and she had seen Arnold out in the garden,

and she was anxious to join him there. Very likely it was all nurse's fancy, and aunt Millicent was all right; if not, it would be time enough to go to see her after breakfast.

So Agatha ran downstairs, singing to herself the song she had been humming while dressing, quite forgetting nurse's injunction to be quiet.

"Where is Millicent?" Mr. Grey inquired, seeing Agatha at the head of the table, as he took his seat some minutes after breakfast had begun.

"Oh, auntie is not coming down; she is tired," said Agatha.

"Nurse says she is ill," said Arnold, with a little indignant look at his sister. "Aunt Millicent would be here if she was only tired."

"Have you seen her, Agatha?" asked Mr. Grey again.

"No, papa."

"How is that, my child? run up at once."

It was a command that Agatha could not disobey; but it was with evident reluctance that she left her seat. It was not pleasant to her to have to consider others; and as for showing sympathy with her aunt, why, if she had spoken out the full truth of her heart, she was rather glad than otherwise that Miss Grey was laid aside for a season, it would make her of somewhat more importance.

She was soon down again, with the information that auntie did not want anything; she thought there was not much the matter with her, but she wished to lie still and be quiet. Mr. Grey was not satisfied, but he did not ask any more questions of Agatha.

Agatha was not in the best of humours that morning; perhaps she wanted to show her authority, for she scolded Johnnie for making a dirty mark on the tablecloth with his egg, and gave little Hugh a sharp rap over his knuckles, which made him cry, because he had spilled his tea.

Mr. Grey drew the little fellow to his lap and kissed him, but he said nothing.

"Papa," said Agatha as they rose from the table, "I am sure Arnold ought not to go to school to-day; do you think he ought?"

"Stuff and nonsense, Agatha!" exclaimed Arnold, reddening, "why not, I should like to know?"

"Because you were nearly drowned on Saturday, hat is why."

"As if I had not got over that! I am not a baby."

"You don't look so much worse as I expected," said Mr. Grey, with a smile; and then he added, in a low, grave tone, "Don't forget how different it might have been, and whose hand brought you safely through."

"I don't want to forget, papa," said Arnold, in the same low tone.

Then as Mr. Grey left the room he turned to Agatha.

"*I wish you would* mind your own business; I *don't want you to interfere* with me; but you see *papa would not listen to you.*"

"It would have been better for you if he had," was Agatha's rather proud answer.

Mr. Grey had gone up to see for himself how his sister was.

Millicent had been trying to rise, but her head was so bad she was fain to lie down again, and Agatha had thoughtlessly drawn up the blind, so the sun was shining in upon her, making her eyes and her head ache almost past bearing; but she hoped with a quiet day's rest to be better in the morning. Mr. Grey spoke of having the doctor from Low Marston, but Millicent would not hear of it; it was all the effect of excitement and suspense, and she would soon be better.

"You must be quick about it then, Millicent," said her brother, as he bent and kissed her, "for we shall get on very badly without you downstairs."

"Oh, Agatha will take my place for awhile. I sometimes think," she went on, pressing the hand she held, and looking up wistfully in his face, "that she would do better in my place altogether. But one can but act according to the best of one's judgment."

"Never think that again then, dear," responded Mr. Grey, heartily and earnestly; "don't let morbid fancies interfere with your getting well, Millicent."

"I won't," she said, as the tears started to her eyes. "Will you send Agatha to me? I have one or two things to say to her."

Agatha was standing just outside the door pulling a rose to pieces, and idly watching the laburnum leaves as they came fluttering down one by one.

Mr. Grey laid his hand on her shoulder.

"Agatha, do you remember a little girl who once told me she wanted to do some good in the world?"

"I suppose you mean me, papa," answered Agatha after a minute's hesitation, not very well pleased to have to own to being the little girl.

"I do. Here is some work come to your hand this morning; will you try to do it willingly and heartily, because God has sent it to you, not as a duty only, Agatha, but as a labour of love?"

Agatha was silent; she did not raise her eyes from the rose that she was diligently pulling to pieces.

"I want you, my child, to be a gentle, loving little niece, and a kind, unselfish sister. It may be only for to-day, or it may be for longer, we cannot tell yet. But unless you do try to overcome your proud temper, and come out of yourself in a little consideration for others, Agatha, aunt Millicent's place will be unfilled, and we shall sorely miss her sweet, gentle ways. She bid me send you up to her now, so don't keep her waiting."

It was not often that Agatha heard such plain speaking. A few words from her father occasionally broke through her good opinion of herself, and touched her to the quick, as now; but even that was but seldom; and if any one else attempted a reproof, she was always ready with her self-

justification; but she dare not reply to her father as her ill temper prompted.

So she took refuge in a passionate flood of tears, which he either did not see or did not heed, for he walked away, only repeating,—

"Remember no one can do this but you, Agatha, and if you neglect it, the opportunity will be lost."

"What does papa mean?" said Agatha to herself, as after a few minutes she dried her eyes. "I am sure either nurse or Martha can attend to aunt Millicent much better than I can; and I don't believe she ails much either, she was never ill before. However, I suppose I must go up to her as she wants me."

Agatha listened to the directions that Millicent gave her, with an air that said she knew quite well without being told. And when she repeated her orders to the cook, it was done in such a way that Anne remarked,—

"I hope Miss Grey isn't going to be upstairs for long; or else that she'll send for me, and tell me herself what she wants. It puts me out of all patience to hear Miss Agatha; one would think she was the mistress, instead of a little chit of a girl."

Millicent had told Agatha that she was to practise her music and read her history; and that if Ida came they were to read together; and when Agatha went into the schoolroom she quite meant to do so; but on the table, in an inviting and conspicuous place, lay a story-book that she had been much interested in the day before, so she took it up, intending to read just a little bit before beginning lessons, and was soon so engrossed in its contents that she forgot time and place, and everything but the story before her.

Ida's voice interrupted her.

"Why, Agatha, I thought I was very late this morning, for mamma kept me to do something for her; but you have not begun work yet. Where is Miss Grey?

Agatha told her in a very matter-of-fact way, without raising her eyes from her book.

"Aunt Millicent ill, and you not with her! Oh, Agatha, I hope it is only a slight illness."

"Very slight, I should say. In fact, I don't believe she is ill at all, only tired."

"I don't wonder she is ill after Saturday night," said Ida, a grave look coming into her face. "I thought we should never see the boys again, didn't you, Agatha?"

"Oh, boys go through a great deal, and turn up again all right; don't you find that out, Ida?"

Ida was silent for a few minutes, during which Agatha went on with her story. At last she spoke again.

"Do you think I may go up to see aunt Millicent just for a minute?"

"No, I think not. She particularly wished to be quiet. And she said we were to read our history together; so we had best begin."

Lessons went on better than one might have expected for an hour. Then Agatha heard a loud crying in the nursery, and she went away to see what was the matter, and Ida was left alone.

Ida waited a minute or two thinking, and then she stole softly from the room and went upstairs. Agatha's account of aunt Millicent had not satisfied her at all, and she longed to see and know for herself how she was. So she gently opened the door of her room, drew the curtain on one side, and looked at her. Millicent's eyes were closed, for she was just then in a slight slumber. But Ida was grieved to see how pale she was, and what a weary look was on her face.

Ida knew something of illness from her mother; and she was sure Miss Grey was worse than Agatha thought. She stooped down and pressed a very gentle kiss on the hand that lay outside on the bed.

The kiss, and a tear that fell with it, awoke Millicent; and she was a little surprised to see Ida there.

"Well, dear," she said, with a faint smile, "I am not able to be with you to-day, you see; but you and Agatha will do very well alone for once."

"Oh, aunt Millicent!" and Ida's pent-up feelings burst forth.

Millicent Grey was so very dear to her that she could not bear the idea of her suffering the least pain; and the "Oh, aunt Millicent!" was all she could say, as she buried her face in her hands and sobbed aloud.

"Why, Ida," said Millicent, her hand stroking the bowed head very gently, "you must not think I am ill. I am not worth all this, Ida dear."

"Oh, Miss Grey, I love you so much that I cannot bear to have you here," murmured Ida.

"Thank you, darling, I believe you do. But there is One who loves me more, Ida; and if He says, 'Come apart and rest awhile,' we may be sure that it is all right. You must not grieve for me. Why, I expect I shall be all right again to-morrow."

Ida shook her head. She did not think it; but she only kissed her friend tenderly several times, and then went down again.

Ida's affection was very sweet and pleasant to Millicent. She could not help comparing her two girlish visitors of that morning; and the comparison was not in favour of Agatha.

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## Chapter XXIII.—Agatha's Walk.

Millicent was not better in the morning, nor for the next two or three days; still she kept saying that she was only tired, and the next day would see her quite well. But when Thursday came and there was no improvement, Mr. Grey thought it quite time that something further should be done. So he wrote a note to Mr. Dunn, of Low Marston, asking him to come and see Miss Grey; and gave it to Arnold, bidding him leave it at the doctor's door before going to school.

There was no fear of Arnold forgetting; he was too anxious about aunt Millicent for that. So in due time Mr. Dunn made his appearance at the vicarage.

He said that Miss Grey was suffering from a kind of low fever, not infectious, nor yet dangerous at present; but she had been very weak to begin with, and there was not much to work upon, and that she would require great care for some time, and very good and efficient nursing. And as Mr. Dunn said that, he looked first at Agatha and then at the nurse, as if he thought the efficient nursing might be difficult to come by.

Nurse understood him—said she would do her best, but she had her little ones to look after.

Mr. Grey reproached himself exceedingly for not having seen that his sister's strength was failing; but she had never complained, and so he had not noticed it. However, his anxiety and fears were roused now, and he was determined that Millicent should have all the care possible now.

"Agatha," he said suddenly, after he had been silent some time thinking deeply, "do you think you could walk to Low Marston this afternoon?"

Agatha opened her eyes wide.

"I never have done such a thing, but I dare say I could. What is it you want, papa?"

"I want to send a telegram to Mrs. Graham to ask her to come. We must have somebody, and she will be the best possible person, if only she can, and will come for awhile."

Agatha's face darkened. She did not want anybody, least of all Mrs. Graham, whom she did not like. She had been picturing to herself how well she would nurse her aunt, and manage the house and everything; then they would see that she was worth something; but now papa had knocked her schemes on the head with one blow.

"Do you think we need any one, papa?" she ventured to say. "I am sure I will do my very best."

"You! do you think you have proved yourself the loving little niece I hoped you would, that I should leave Millicent under your care? No, Agatha. Besides, I am sure it will be a great comfort to your aunt to have her dear friend with her at a time like this."

"Very well, papa."

"If you think it will be too long a walk for you to go to Low Marston, I will try to find some other messenger; but I cannot go myself, and I do not know whom else to trust."

"I will go, papa."

"Thank you, dear. Then I will write the telegram, and you will have nothing to do but leave it."

Mr. Grey went into his study, and soon returned with a paper which he gave to Agatha; and on it was written, "Come at once; to-night if you can; *Millicent is ill, and needs you*;" and the address.

"*By the way, Agatha,*" Mr. Grey said, just as *he was leaving the room,* "you had better ask Ida to drive you; she would do it with pleasure if you asked her. Perhaps the walk will be too much for you; and I do not want you ill on my hands too."

"Thank you, papa, I would rather walk; I dare say it will do me no harm."

Far rather knock herself up ten times over, she thought secretly, than ask a favour of Ida.

So as soon as dinner was over, Agatha prepared for her walk. It was not what she would have chosen; indeed, she knew quite well that had aunt Millicent been able to be consulted such a thing would never have been thought of; for though she was much stronger than she used to be, she had never walked anything like that distance, and certainly never alone.

But Mr. Grey was too anxious and uneasy about Millicent to have any fears for Agatha.

It was a pleasant afternoon for a walk, neither hot nor dusty; and Agatha took it leisurely, for she meant to stay and return with the boys when they left school. Gathering wild flowers and blackberries beguiled the way; and it was not until she was considerably more than halfway to Low Marston that she suddenly remembered she had never brought the telegram after all; at least she feared not. She had put the paper into her pocket when Mr. Grey gave it to her; but she had changed her dress before setting out, and it was not in her pocket now.

However, it did not much matter, for she recollected quite well every word. But she had not gone many yards farther when she was again brought to a standstill. What should she do? she had quite forgotten Mrs. Graham's address. She had removed since they left Willington; and to what street or to what part of the town, Agatha had not the faintest notion. Mr. Grey had written it down, of course, but she had taken no notice.

It was too late to go back now, yet how could she send for Mrs. Graham when she did not know where to send to? It came into her mind not to send the telegram at all, and then they would not be troubled with Mrs. Graham, and papa would never know the reason why she did not come; but Agatha turned away from the idea directly. She could not be so dishonourable; she could not so far betray the trust reposed in her. So she walked on with slow and lagging steps, not knowing what to do.

Perhaps Arnold might remember the address, but she did not at all like to ask him; it would not be pleasant to have to own to him that she had forgotten half her errand. However, it would be useless going to send the telegram, not knowing where to send it to. So there was nothing for it but to linger about near Dr. Waybridge's door until school closed.

It was a long time to wait, and Agatha got heartily tired; but the boys came rushing out at last. She pounced upon Arnold directly.

"Holloa, Agatha! what in the world are you doing here?"

"Oh, Arnold, what a while you have been! I have been waiting for you ages."

"How did you come? and what did you want?"

"I came on an errand for papa, and I want to know if you can tell me what Mrs. Graham's address is; I have forgotten it."

Arnold gave it immediately; but it was the old one.

"I know that, of course!" cried Agatha, impatiently, "don't you know that she has removed? it is her present one I want."

"No, I never even heard that. Are you writing to her for aunt Millicent, Agatha? because you had better send your letter to the address you do know, and put on it to be forwarded. I wish I could have helped you better; but I wonder you did not make sure before you left home."

"I am not writing to her."

And Agatha walked away to escape further questioning.

Arnold wondered for a minute what she could mean; but there were more important matters occupying his mind just then; and he turned to resume an interesting discussion which he had been holding with one of his schoolfellows when Agatha interrupted them.

Agatha could think of nothing better in her dilemma than to follow Arnold's advice; so she went straight to the telegraph office and sent the telegram to the address she knew of. The clerk smiled a little at the "to be forwarded," but it was no business of his.

However, Agatha knew that there was no chance of Mrs. Graham arriving to-night now. In her hurry she had not asked the boys to wait for her; so there was the prospect of another long, lonely walk, when the dusk of the evening would be coming on too. But just as she came out of the town Basil met her; he had been waiting for her, as the other two did not seem inclined to do so. Basil was not likely to make any inquiries respecting her errand, so Agatha was glad and happy to go with him.

Basil had questions to ask, though; but they referred to Miss Grey, and he was much grieved to find that she was more ill than they thought her to be.

"Mind you look after her well, Agatha; I am sure she deserves all you can do for her."

"Of course I shall!" said Agatha, drawing herself up and looking indignant. "I am quite able to nurse her, though I believe papa thinks of sending for Mrs. Graham. I think there is no need to make so much fuss; aunt Millicent will be well again before she gets here, I dare say."

"I suppose you don't like any one to be an invalid but yourself," Basil answered, with a good-humoured look at her; "but it is well Mrs. Graham is coming, I am very glad to hear it."

And then he busied himself with making up a pretty little bunch of grasses and wild flowers, which he gave to Agatha to take to her aunt from him.

Agatha was very tired when she reached home. Mr. Grey himself met her, took off her hat, and bid her lie down on the sofa and rest for an hour before doing anything else. He kissed her and thanked her; and he did not even ask if she had sent the telegram all right.

It made Agatha more uneasy than ever to think that her papa trusted her so completely, and that she had failed; especially as all through the evening Mr. Grey was expecting Mrs. Graham. He kept going to the door to listen for the cab that was to bring her from Low Marston; but of course Mrs. Graham never came.

Agatha said nothing, and no one knew but herself what she had forgotten.

It was late, but Mr. Grey was still sitting in his study reading and writing, when there came a gentle tap at the door, and Agatha entered in her dressing-gown with her hair hanging down her back. She had gone to her room some time before, but she could not settle to sleep without first telling her father what had passed.

Mr. Grey looked up in surprise. Of course his first thought was for Millicent.

"No, papa, it is not aunt Millicent, it is me. I wanted to tell you that I quite forgot to take your paper this afternoon, and so I had to send the message from memory, and I am afraid it was not quite right."

And then she told him that she could not remember the correct address.

"You ought to have told me as soon as you returned, Agatha; then your carelessness might perhaps have been remedied, for it was not then too late for to-day's post. But I am glad you have told me now; and I am glad, too, that Millicent was not expecting Mrs. Graham; the suspense would have been the worst thing possible for her."

"I dare say Mrs. Graham will come to-morrow, so it will not matter so very much, will it, papa?"

"Oh, Agatha, that is your failing; you can never own yourself to be in the wrong. It always matters, my child, whether we do right or not, even in little things. You must seek for more humility, Agatha, and be willing to see and feel that you are not always right. But go to bed now, or you will not be fit for anything in the morning, and be thankful that your carelessness has resulted in nothing worse than a great disappointment to your father."

Mrs. Graham did come the next day, having got the telegram in a roundabout fashion; and Agatha's reign as mistress of the household was ended, much to the satisfaction of everybody but herself.

## A HINT TO THE ENERGETIC.

Do not wait for opportunities; make them for yourself.

# OTTO THE ORPHAN BOY.

By M. Betham-Edwards.

## Chapter V.—How to see the World.

All that sparkling, bird-singing, flower-scented afternoon Otto was gliding down the river Rhine in one of those timber barges which ply between all stations. His whole belongings, consisting of a box of good clothes, a few books, a flute, and a dozen gold pieces, were with him, and he felt as rich as a sultan. Past villages and churches, ruined towers and vine-covered slopes, they went, meeting many a tourist-laden steamer bound to Spiers and Coblentz. The river was alive with crafts of all descriptions, and sometimes they passed other barges so near that they interchanged a few words with their occupants. How fine it was to see the world thus! thought Otto, and the novelty of the sensation made him forget what he had left behind. When evening drew on the bargeman invited him to a homely supper of black-bread, wild boar ham, salad, and sour wine—but how good it tasted! Otto thought he had never supped so well in his life before, and slept soundly on his hard couch on deck.

When he awoke it was to behold a marvellous scene. The sun was already high in the heavens, and opposite to him and closely rose a beautiful city with glittering spires and a lofty cathedral, and white palaces and villas shining in the morning sun. It was market day, and crowds of peasants were arranging their wares, fruits and flowers, cakes and toys, the young women laughing and singing, the old making coffee and gossiping under the red-blue umbrellas. What a gay scene it was! what a splendid city! Otto, who had never beheld cities before, thought it must be the capital of the world, and thought he must surely do right in trying to make his fortune there.

"Wilt thou stay here, or go back with us, youngster?" said the bargemen, good-naturedly; "we return to-night at eight o'clock sharp, if thou art tired of seeing the world by that time."

But Otto thanked them and shook his head. Then with their help he got his trunk safely lodged at a little inn on shore, and with quite a manly air ordered some breakfast.

"I will see the fair and the town," he said, "and then make my way on foot to Wirtemberg. My mistress came from Wirtemberg, I am sure it must be a nice place."

So he despatched his coffee and bread briskly, and was soon staring with all his might at the wonders of the streets. He had heard of Paris and London, but surely they could not boast of such wonders as this Rhine town! There were *dozens of gold watches* in the windows, and jewels *of all colours, and silks* and knives of every *imaginable kind, and pictures* and toys; could any one even have imagined such beautiful things? There were some pleasure-gardens and picture galleries and libraries, all of which he contrived to see during that long bewildering day, and in the evening music and dancing under the trees outside the town.

No wonder that his dreams were somewhat disturbed that night, and that his hostess had some difficulty in waking him for the coach at five o'clock.

But the coach waits for nobody, and here Otto had to scramble at the last moment without his breakfast. As it was, the post-boys had waited a few seconds, and no sooner was their last passenger seated than up they jumped in their blue jackets, yellow breeches, and high hats, and flourishing their whips and calling to heir horses, they dashed out of the town at full speed. It is a fine thing to ride at the top of a coach when the horses are in full gallop. Things look very differently from that dizzy height, and no wonder that as they flew past cottage and tree, and staring country folks, the post boys seemed to him to be dealing in magic and making all these fly too. When they slackened pace he found that they were driving through a highly-cultivated and fertile region, divided into orchards and cornfields and vineyards, with few hills around, but instead wide plains and white villages here and there. As they continued their way, they seemed to reach the heart of the orchard country. The roads were burdened with apple trees, and in some places nothing but orchards were to be seen on either side.

They halted several times to exchange horses and take refreshment at wayside inns, and at nightfall stopped at a little town of such inviting aspect that Otto decided to stay and try his fortunes there.

It was quite a small town, having only one long street, in the midst of which was a fountain and a market-place, but the gardens were full of roses, and the pink and yellow houses with green shutters looked cheerful, and the people were more pleasant-faced than usual, Otto thought. And then above the town rose a beautiful green hill crowned with a castle, and looking down upon a small river, and he pleased himself with thinking that the castle and the hill and the river would remind him of his beautiful home in Rhineland far away. So when he had said his prayers that night and was fast asleep, no wonder that he mixed up the two together in his dreams, and fancied himself in the old house and the new both at once, and driving all the while at the top of the mail-coach.

At five o'clock next morning all the household was astir, and Otto, full of plans, rose also. He found the landlady busy giving the post-boys their breakfast, but when this was done, and the mail-coach had started, she was ready to attend to him and hear what he had to say.

"I'll tell you what to do, my lad," she said;

"there's no work in a place like this for a sharp, well-instructed lad like you, but just go to the schoolmaster and hear what he has to say. He knows the ways of the world, and if he advises at all, it will be for your good. Neither I nor my good man are the folks to come to for anything better than a good meal and a night's lodging."

So when twelve o'clock had chimed from the village tower Otto set out to confer with the schoolmaster.

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## Chapter VI.—What Fortune Otto found.

Just as Otto unlatched the gate a score or two of children—boys, girls, and toddlekins—ran out of the school-house, flinging up their hats, tossing their balls, and making as much noise as possible. He stepped aside, and when they had all passed out, tapped boldly at the door. A girl about his own age, with blue eyes rosy cheeks, and flaxen hair pigtail tied with black ribbon, answered the summons, and after a little friendly talk fetched her hat, and went out with him in search of grandfather.

They found the schoolmaster in the vegetable garden, working among the potatoes, a silvery-haired, benevolent old man, with large blue spectacles and a black skull-cap. Leaning on his hoe, he pushed the spectacles off his forehead, and eyed the new-comer curiously.

"So you want something to do, young master?" he said, when Otto had told his story, with many blushes; "and what is it you can do, eh?"

Otto pulled out of his breast pocket a long strip of parchment bearing the princess's seal, on which was written the following:—

"The bearer of this, Otto ——, is a well-instructed, well-conducted orphan lad, who was brought up in the household of the Princess Jingenfeld, and at his own request went away to procure his livelihood. Any further inquiries about him will be answered by me.

"Julius Schmidt,
"House Physician to the Princess Jingenfeld."

The schoolmaster, who went by the name of Father Paul, read this over at least six times, and then returned it to the boy, saying,—

"Thou art an honest lad, and an industrious lad, I'll be bound; but I know nothing in the way of work here, unless you stayed here and helped me in the school. I'm getting sadly deaf now, and I cannot write copies as I used to do. You might be a very serviceable boy to me—leastways, will you try it till something better turns up?"

"Dear grandfather," the girl said, "I am sure you have talked of having an assistant many a time, and here one has dropped from the clouds. You will stay, Otto, won't you?"

Otto's frank blue eyes glistened with joyful tears, but the old man chided the girl for her importunities.

"Nay, Lottie, the lad has had no time to consider his yea or his nay yet. Let us give him time. Meanwhile fetch your clothes, my boy, and come here for a week on trial. We shall see how the thing works, and can then talk of staying or going."

Otto thanked the good old man, and not doubting for a moment that he had found a home after his own heart, fetched his goods and chattels with a light heart. It was half-holiday, so Lottie set to work to scrub out the spare attic, nailed up some snowy curtains, put a clothes-press under the window, and when Otto had finished his gardening, showed him his room delightedly. Then Otto unpacked his trunk and showed all his treasures to the wondering Lottie, the purse of gold pieces, the princess's parting gift, the portraits of his beloved mistress and her children, the framed water-colour drawings the Princess Gertrude had given him of the castle and the river, the gaily bound picture books, and his numerous birthday and Christmas gifts, the snowy white Sunday shirts, the Bible and Prayer Book with massive silver clasps,—in fact, the hundred and one things that made up the sum-total of his worldly fortune.

After supper Otto talked to his new friends of his childhood and childhood's benefactors till bedtime. It was like a fairy tale to Lottie, who had never seen a princess in her life, and Father Paul loved to listen as well as she. The trio could have sat up all night discoursing on the welcome theme, but the day's work began early for all, so they must be to bed betimes.

It was a hard-working but happy life at the school, and we need hardly say that Otto stayed. In the daytime he helped Father Paul with the school and the gardening, and made himself useful to Lottie also in many ways, fetching the wood, gathering the fruit, doing errands, and even lending a hand in the cleaning when necessary. After supper he would read aloud, whilst Lottie plied her knitting-needles and Father Paul smoked his pipe, and the three would saunter along the harvest-fields and vineyards, or down by the river-side. Sometimes a village festival would take place, when the young people dressed in their best would dance on the village green; or they would make an excursion on foot to some neighbouring village on a visit to friends, but no life could be quieter or less eventful, and perhaps that was one reason why time passed so quickly.

As Otto grew more experienced and Father Paul more infirm, the teaching fell more and more into the lad's hands, and he liked his work amazingly. He no longer indulged in ambitious dreams, he did not want to make a fortune or a name now, he was quite content to lead this humble, useful life for the rest of his days, and thought God had been very kind in leading him to Father Paul and Lottie.

His first home and his early benefactors he never forgot for an hour, but they seemed vanished into dreamland now. By this time the young prince and princess would surely have forgotten him, he said, and though occasionally his heart yearned to

the scenes of his childhood, only in dreams was the stately castle by the Rhine ever revisited.

So the years passed, and one day Otto and Lottie, now youth and maiden, found themselves orphans in their dear old home. Father Paul had peacefully passed away at a good old age, another master was appointed in his place; once more the wide world lay before the foundling, but this time he was not alone.

"Never fear, Lottie," he said, drawing the weeping girl to him, "I will take care of you, and as long as Otto lives you shall want for nothing."

"But what shall we do, Otto?" asked Lottie, when he had wiped away the tears from her eyes.

"I will tell you, dear Lottie," said the young man, for Otto was now tall, and straight, and well-formed, with brown curls and a high forehead and a commanding look. "We will get the good parson here to marry us, and then we will pack up our things and go to the capital, and see if work is to be found there."

Lottie consented, not without many tears and blushes, and everything was done as Otto had said. The good pastor married them, they packed up their belongings, and having made the journey partly on foot and partly by mail coach, reached the capital one bright summer day, having spent the best part of a week on the way.

They were in no hurry to reach the town, and there was so much to see as they journeyed along. Lottie had never been twenty miles from her native village, and everything seemed new to her.

But when they drew near the capital her amazement knew no bounds. Could enough people be found to tenant those countless houses? The little capital seen in the distance was a Babylon to her, and she insisted upon stopping at a wayside inn to put on their best clothes.

"We must not enter such a grand place dressed like beggars," she said; so in the course of an hour they emerged in holiday costume. Lottie wore a short blue dress, black velvet bodice, silver ornaments, and a pretty little mob-cap; and Otto a Tyrolese hat, knee breeches, white stockings, and a waistcoat covered with silk embroidery. Thus equipped they entered the suburbs.

But what was happening that all the citizens wore Sunday clothes too? flags were flying from every steeple, and bells pealing, drums and tambours sounding in every direction. Their questions were only answered by hurrying passers by with an incredulous smile and a hasty answer, "The king! the king!"

"It must be a royal birthday or wedding, and they laugh at us because we know nothing about it," Lottie said, reddening with vexation; "but what a fortunate thing that we stopped to put on our best clothes! Let us make haste, dear Otto, and see the king."

*As they advanced into* the centre of the town *the scene grew more and* more bewildering *Flags waved in the principal* streets from every window, the walls were covered with festoons and garlands, while emblazoned in gold and purple the inscription met you at every corner, "Long live the king!" The balconies were crowded with ladies and children, dressed for the most part in white, and bearing large bunches of flowers in their hands, whilst brilliant canopies of red and blue cloth were erected for the accommodation of spectators here and there. Meantime the crowds grew more dense. Mounted soldiers lined the road, and expectation was written in every face.

At last the tramp of horses is heard, mingled with shouts, and a murmur runs through the assembled crowd, "He comes!"

First of all came a detachment of cavalry, helmets glittering, swords flashing, plumes waving; then after a little space came riding alone and slowly a slender youth, with a sweet, thoughtful face, who bowed bareheaded to the crowd, and smiled thanks for their welcome. Enthusiasm knew no bounds as the young king rode by on his beautiful white charger. Handkerchiefs were waved, hats flourished, flowers thrown in the king's path, and the air rang with "Long live the king!"

Then followed, in an open carriage drawn by four grey horses, two ladies, the elder dressed in rich purple satin, the younger in pure white; and it was easy to see from their likeness to the king that they were his mother and sister. The young princess, with her fair curls and sweet smile and gracious ways, seemed to charm every heart, and "God bless her!" fell from many a mouth as she drove by. Then followed a train of royal equipages, with gorgeously dressed ladies, and princes and officers with brilliant uniforms and diamond stars, till, what with the glitter, and the crowds, and the commotion, poor Lottie grew giddy and confused, and clutching her companion's arm, said,—

"Had we not better go now, Otto? We have been standing in the hot sun so long."

What was her dismay on finding that it was not her Otto standing by, but a stranger! who good-naturedly smiled at her mistake, and told her that the young man had rushed away some minutes before. Poor Lottie's courage failed her at finding herself alone in such a crowd. Whither could Otto have gone, or what motive could have urged him to leave her so suddenly? She drew back a little, and managed to reach a door-step, on which she sat dismally enough.

After a little time she began to cry, for it seemed to her that either something dreadful must have happened, or Otto must for the first time in his life be really unkind to leave her in this plight.

## EDITORIAL NOTICES.

NEXT month we shall announce the titles of the new stories for 1877.

The SUNSHINE volume for 1876 will be ready on the 20th of this month, price 1s. 6d. in plain cloth; 2s. 6d. in cloth extra, gilt edges. Covers for binding, 6d. and 9d., by order of any bookseller.

# SUNSHINE.

EDITED BY W. M. WHITTEMORE, D.D., RECTOR OF ST. KATHERINE CREE, LONDON.

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[ALINE OVERHEARING MADGE'S PLOT.]

## LITTLE ALINE.

### A STORY OF GIPSY LIFE.

By the Author of "Pet's Difficulties."

### Chapter XXXIV.—The Kite's Nest.

Madge Lee was not a pleasant-looking woman, and had Faith been obliged to see and speak to her, she would very much have disliked it.

But Ethel was not at all timid, and from her earliest years she had been so accustomed to the presence of gipsies in the neighbourhood that she thought no more of them than of any other poor people.

The first words, too, that Madge uttered made Ethel quite forget the slight feeling of repugnance with which she had observed the woman's approach.

"I've come to you from Aline; I've brought you a message from her," she said, abruptly.

"From Aline!" exclaimed Ethel, eagerly. "What is it? Where is she?"

"She's ill—dying, may be, and she's crying out for you; she wants to see you directly."

"Ill! dying!" repeated Ethel, turning very pale; "it is impossible! I have not heard anything about it. What has happened?"

"Our folks has mostly gone away northwards, as you knows, and Aline and her aunt, who were at Springfield, were to have joined them, but Aline had set her mind on seeing you afore she went away, and so she stayed along with us for a little while.

"And what then?" asked Ethel, as the gipsy paused for a minute.

"She set off on Monday to come here, though she was so weak and ill that she was not fit for it, and she managed to get as far as the Kite's Nest, and there she was took so bad that she fainted away, and could not stir another step."

"Where is she now?"

"Down at the Kite's Nest, miss. We fetched some shavings and threw an old sack over them, and she's a-lying on 'em as white as a sheet, and can't swallow a drop of anything."

"Why did you not come and tell me before?"

"Because I dursn't come to the Hall, miss; I was afeard of meeting the squire; but whenever I could leave the poor girl I've been watching to catch sight of you."

"Well, tell Aline how sorry I am to hear she is so ill, and say that I will be sure to come and see her this afternoon."

"Oh, miss, don't wait till this afternoon!" said the gipsy, imploringly. "She can't last many hours, and she's so longing to see you. Do come, if only just for a minute."

Ethel hesitated. Faith would soon return, and would wonder and perhaps be alarmed at her disappearance. Yet she did not wish to seem unkind in delaying her visit to Aline. She told her difficulty to Madge Lee, who answered her by blowing a small whistle which hung at her side. In less than a minute the sound brought a small boy, with a face as brown as a berry, and a tangled mass of dark hair falling over his eyes.

"Come here, Isaac, and do what this young lady bids you; she's got a message for you to give to somebody. He'll wait by the tree," she added, turning to Ethel, "and say what you please to your friend when she passes presently."

So Ethel described Faith to him, and told him to tell her that she had gone to see Aline, but should soon be back again, and would join her at the cottage.

Then she walked away with Madge, the latter lingering behind a moment to say a few words to the boy in their own gipsy language. He nodded his head and she left him there.

Madge led the way, and Ethel followed, or rather walked at her side, anxiously questioning her about Aline, and eager to learn all that she could about her. A more experienced listener *than Ethel* might have detected some little flaws *in the glib, plausible* account that the woman *poured forth so freely*, but Ethel was too full of interest in Aline to notice any want of agreement in its parts.

They crossed two meadows, and then went down a narrow lane, and at the end of that took the right-hand path through Stavely Wood.

Ethel had a dim recollection of having once been to the Kite's Nest, and she knew it was in Stavely Wood; but she had forgotten the exact distance, or she would have hesitated more about leaving Faith for so long. She half wished she had waited for Faith to accompany her; it would have been the wiser plan, she thought. But she had acted on the impulse of the moment in her eagerness to see her little gipsy friend, and it would be a pity now to retrace her steps when she had so nearly obtained the object of her walk.

Kite's Nest was a dilapidated, ruinous sort of building, which had long been uninhabited, and was fast going to decay. It had formerly been used for smuggling purposes, and some of the country folks said it was haunted; but it was haunted only by the occasional visits of the gipsies, who stored some of their things in it in the wet weather.

Faith would have been frightened to go through that dreary wood with a gipsy woman for a companion; and, in truth, it was not a cheery place for a stroll, for the paths were narrow and winding, and the thick foliage of the trees shut out the blue sky and most of the sunshine. But Ethel was a country girl, and accustomed to solitary roads in which you never expected to meet a creature, or to hear any sound but the crackling of the leaves under your feet, or the twitter of the birds in the branches.

"I did not think it was quite so far to the Kite's Nest, or I should not have come," she said to Madge Lee.

"We are just upon it, miss. We could have taken a shorter cut to it, but that way would have been too muddy for your thin boots. There is the Kite's Nest."

The old tenement looked more deplorable than ever. One wall had fallen down, and the others were crumbling away; the chimneys looked tottering, and there were gaps in the roof. All the panes of glass had long since left the windows, and it was not easy to conceive of a more desolate habitation in which a sick and dying child could be lying.

"What a wretched place!" exclaimed Ethel; "it is not fit for a dog to live in. Poor Aline!"

"It is not so bad at the back; there are two or three rooms where the rain does not come in much."

She did not push open the door, for with the exception of one panel the door had vanished, and they passed without difficulty through the open space.

Madge pointed to a room on the left of the hall, and said, "Will you just wait here a minute, miss, while I tell Aline you've come? It won't do to startle her if she's asleep."

Ethel stepped inside as directed, and thought

she had never seen a more dismal room. The boards were black and worm-eaten, and the walls damp and discoloured, and it had not any window, only a skylight. As she glanced round, pitying anybody who could be glad of such a resting-place, she was surprised to hear the shutting of the door, and also, she fancied, the turning of the key in the lock! Looking hastily in that direction, she saw that she was not mistaken, but that the door was indeed closed, and when she tried the handle it refused to open to her touch. It was evidently either locked or bolted!

What could this mean? The wind might have blown to the door, but could not have fastened it. Ethel pulled, and knocked, and called, but all in vain; no one answered her, and perfect stillness seemed to reign in the place. She waited awhile, and then repeated and redoubled her efforts to make herself heard, but Madge never appeared; and at length the truth flashed on Ethel's mind that she was purposely shut in and left alone.

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## Chapter XXXV.—Terrible Suspense.

It was a terrible moment for the poor child, for she saw no possible way of escape. She could not force the door, and there was no window to which she might climb and jump from it. The only piece of furniture in the room was part of the trunk of an old tree, and Ethel sat down on that, and cried as if her heart would break. How could she hope for deliverance? Who would think of searching for her there? She was sure that as soon as she was missed many would be looking for her, but was it likely they would think of such an out-of-the-way spot as the Kite's Nest?

Besides, what could have been Madge Lee's motive for thus decoying her from home? For Ethel felt sure now it was all a make-up about Aline's illness. Oh, how foolish she had been to go off with Madge without making further inquiries, or at least stopping for Faith! What would her fate be? Was Madge gone for some of her companions, and would they come back and carry her off somewhere from whence she could never return? or did they intend to leave her there to starve?

Either alternative was too dreadful to think about, and yet Ethel could scarcely think of anything else. She shouted at the highest pitch of her voice, in order that some stray passer by, or some one in search of her, might hear her, and come to her rescue; but though she shouted until she was hoarse, not even an echo responded to her cries. She walked up and down the room sobbing, feeling as helpless as a bird in a cage; and as hour after hour passed, and not the sound of a human voice fell upon her ear, her dismay changed into despair. It seemed to her that she was forsaken and forgotten. She began to dread that she should have to spend the night there. And she was already both hungry and thirsty and tired.

What if she should never be discovered at all,—at least, not while she was alive? Ethel shuddered at the prospect, and strove in vain to calm herself. She could not help giving way to a burst of grief, which left her faint and exhausted.

Then, all at once, some sweet thoughts of her heavenly Father's love came into her mind. Lonely and harassed as she was, His eye saw her, and His arm was around her. She need not be afraid, since He was with her. He would provide for her in this time of need, and would send somebody to find her. She covered her face with her hands, and in a few simple words she asked Him to tell her friends where she was, and how much she wanted them; and then, utterly wearied by the suspense and the fright she had gone through, she threw herself on the floor, leaned her head on the hard log, and fell asleep.

When Faith returned to the tree under which she had left Ethel, she was astonished to find her place occupied by a rough-headed little gipsy boy. He got up when he saw a stranger approaching, and giving a tug to his hair as an apology for a bow, he remarked, without any preface,—

"She said you worn't to wait for her."

"Who said so?" asked Faith.

"A young lady that was a-sitting here with pink ribbons in her hat. She told me to tell you that when you come by."

"But where has she gone, and why am I not to wait for her?"

He shook his head. "I dunno; I didn't got no other message for you."

And with all her cross-questioning, Faith could not gather any more information from him. If he had been entrusted with any other message he had apparently forgotten it, or he was so stupid that he had not understood it. So Faith went on to the cottage, thinking that she should perhaps find Ethel there. But she was not there, neither had she been there that morning.

But when Ben Hurst's wife heard what Faith was talking about, she said that two or three minutes since, as she was opening her bedroom window, she had observed Mr. Raymond passing the door. "So no doubt he had met with Miss Ethel, and she had walked off with him somewhere; and the gipsy lad had been left to explain how it had happened." This was Mrs. Hurst's solution of the difficulty, and it seemed so natural, that Faith accepted it without any hesitation; and she remained some time talking to the poor widow, and reading to her little boy. Then she returned to the farm.

It was just dinner-time, and Philip was in the kitchen washing his hands.

When Margaret saw that Faith was alone, she said,—

"Why, where is Miss Ethel?"

"With her papa, I believe," answered Faith,

cheerfully; "she has not been with me for some time."

"She is certainly not with Mr. Raymond," said Philip, coming out of the kitchen, where he had overheard their remarks, "for I only parted from him five minutes ago, and he has been with me nearly all the morning, looking over the farm."

"Tell me when Miss Ethel left you, and why?" asked Margaret anxiously of Faith. And Faith gave a hasty but clear account of all that had happened as far as she knew.

Philip looked at Margaret, and she returned the look in some consternation.

"I hope those gipsies have not been up to any of their tricks," he said, sternly.

"What ever makes you think that, Philip?"

"Because Giles Lee and his wife have been skulking about the neighbourhood lately, and I've been expecting mischief to come of it."

"But, Philip, what has that to do with Miss Ethel?"

"I don't know; nothing, I trust," he said; "but they owe the squire a grudge on Tom Boswell's account, and they would not be particular as to the way of paying it off."

Margaret looked frightened, and Faith burst into tears.

"Don't cry, child," said Philip, kindly; "I dare say Miss Ethel is all right enough; but we must bestir ourselves, and look for her till she is found."

So everybody on the farm was sent different ways in search of Miss Ethel; Margaret went to the Hall, half sure that she would be there, and Philip hastened to explore the usual gipsy haunts. Faith stayed to mind the house. She was very miserable, and did little else but cry, and stand at the door, on the look-out for tidings. I do not think that Ethel, in her imprisonment, was more heart-broken than poor Faith in her freedom. They were alike in another respect; they could both lift up their hearts in prayer to God for His help; and as Faith tried to cast her burden on the Lord, she grew a little more hopeful.

But when the afternoon wore away, and not the slightest trace of Ethel had been discovered, everybody's alarm was increased. Her parents were almost distracted. Mr. Raymond felt as if it were a just retribution to him for his former neglect of his little girl, and his coldness towards her. Intelligence was given at all the police stations within a few miles of the village, and al possible means for finding the fugitive wer adopted; but up to a late hour every researc ended in disappointment.

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## Chapter XXXVI.—Little Aline proves a Friend in Need.

*Aline, supposed to be ill and dying,* was as well as usual, *and still with her* aunt at Springfield. She knew nothing of the untruths that were forged against her, nor of the cruel design which Madge Lee, and her equally worthless husband, had against Ethel. She would have been half out of her mind, poor child, if she had had the slightest suspicion of the true state of affairs. But her aunt had promised that she should go over to the Hill Farm in a day or two, and see her old friends, and with that permission Aline was satisfied. She had been for a long walk that day, to carry some baskets to a lady, and to receive the money for them, and she was so tired out when she returned that, finding her aunt away somewhere, she laid herself in a sheltered nook formed by some bushes, just behind the tents, and fell asleep.

When she awoke she heard voices, and could not for the moment recollect where she was. While endeavouring to collect her thoughts, the name of Miss Ethel caught her ear, and with the caution, if not cunning, of her race she softly raised her head on her elbow to listen. She was close behind Madge Lee's tents, and she was speaking to her husband, in a low muttering tone, of her clever concealment of the squire's daughter. He gave a chuckling sort of laugh as she finished.

"Well done, old girl," he said, "we've got our revenge now; but are you sure you made the door fast?"

"Yes; here's the key," she said, pulling it out of her pocket. "We'll throw it in the river when we get away from here; but I'll put it in this old basin for the present."

It was then arranged that Giles should hastily make a bundle of their few things and pack the ragged bit of a tent together, while Madge went to buy some necessary eatables; after which they were to hurry off and hide themselves from pursuit, for Madge was certain Mr. Raymond would follow in their track when he learnt what she had done to his daughter.

You can hardly imagine Aline's feelings when she heard this unexpected news. Her heart beat so quickly that she could scarcely breathe for a minute or two, and her cheeks were burning with excitement. She lay perfectly still, not daring to move lest she should be discovered; but the one idea uppermost in her mind was that she must depart as soon as possible, and release Miss Ethel from her unpleasant situation. She waited, peeping through the bushes, till she saw Madge hasten on her errand, and then she watched her opportunity while Giles was fetching some water from the spring, and creeping stealthily into the tent, she snatched the key out of the broken china basin and rushed off with it as fast as her legs could carry her.

Giles, coming back with his pitcher, caught sight of her frock vanishing amidst the trees, and wondered for a minute where she had sprung from; but he was accustomed to her wild movements, and if he thought any more about her, he only thought that for some reason she was wishful to escape from her aunt's observation.

Fast and still faster Aline went on her way. She seemed as if she could not go quickly enough. Indignation, fear, and pity urged her along; indignation against Giles and Madge, fear lest she should be overtaken, and pity for Miss Ethel. It was nearly five miles to the Kite's Nest, and though Aline was used to as long walks when they were on the tramp, yet she found this one very tedious and wearisome. It was, perhaps, her impatience to be at her journey's end which made the miles appear so much onger than usual.

By the time she reached the Green Hollow it was getting dusk, and when she entered Stavely Wood, heated and panting with running, there was scarcely sufficient glimmering of light through the foliage for her to see the path before her. But Aline stumbled on as she best could, over drifted leaves, broken boughs, and stumps of decayed trees, until she felt rather than saw that she was close to the old ruin. Groping carefully along she found her way to the back room, in which she judged, from Madge's description, that Ethel was imprisoned.

"It's only me, Miss Ethel," she said, as she inserted the key in the lock, and quietly opened the door.

There was no answer, nor any sound; only a light heap of something in the corner hardly discernible in the gloom. It was Ethel's pink and white cambric dress which attracted her eye. For an instant she was afraid that Ethel was ill or faint; but her regular breathing soon convinced Aline that she was merely asleep.

Aline gently laid her hand on Ethel's, and the slight touch roused her.

"Who is it? Where am I?" she exclaimed, with a sudden start of terror.

"Don't be frightened, Miss Ethel dear; it's me—little Aline; I will take care of you," she said, soothingly.

At first Ethel was almost too bewildered to understand what had happened, or that she was at liberty to get up and go; but a few more words from Aline soon enlightened her, and with eager step and thankful heart she took Aline's hand, and was guided by her out of the dreary Kite's Nest, and through the darksome wood.

How glad Aline was that she was the one to release Miss Ethel! for she was deeply grateful to her for all the kindness she had shown to her, and all the interest she had taken in her in the past, and was delighted to have an opportunity of making some slight return to her. And Ethel felt that the little gipsy girl had indeed proved a friend to her in her time of need.

Great was the joy at the Hall, the farm, and throughout the village, when Ethel was restored, safe and sound, to her distressed father and mother.

And though years have passed since then, and though Ethel is now a tall young lady, and Aline her bright, black-eyed waiting-maid, and Faith is mistress of the girls' school, yet they often remember and talk about the memorable day when Miss Ethel was shut up in the Kite's Nest, and the little gipsy girl's hand was the one that set her free.

## SCOBIE.

### PART THIRD.

AFTER this it was determined that never should one of Scobie's kittens be destroyed. Already several litters were bespoken; every one was anxious to possess the progeny of such a wonderful cat. So in process of time when three little things, a warm, soft moving lump, were found in a basket in the drawing-room they were left undisturbed, and Scobie devoted herself to them in the most motherly manner. But as if made doubly anxious by the misadventures to her foster-children, she was very suspicious of any stranger, and showed fierce animosity to strange cats. The very sight, too, of a passing dog would rouse her ire, and make her curve her back and hiss with rage. On these occasions Busy showed her perfect sympathy by chasing the cats and offering combat to the dogs.

One day one of the kittens was found on the rug, lying soft and warm against Busy's sleek body. She had lifted it out of the basket, anxious to share with her friend the pleasures of maternity. Scobie did not at all resent this interference with her duties; she seemed to take all that Busy did as matter of course, purring in approval.

But there came a sad day for the cottage, for Busy, and for Scobie. A gentleman from some distance came one afternoon to make a visit, bringing with him two fox terriers. Scobie flew about the room in terror and rage; the dogs were shut out, it was supposed on the road. Scobie returned to her basket, but getting uneasy she stole out of the room to see where the enemy had gone to. In a short time, sounds of distress proceeded from the garden; the visitor went out, and found his dogs worrying a cat. He did not know Scobie nor her wonderful doings; he only saw that his dogs, following their instincts, were killing a cat. He called them off, beating them with a stick; the cat made off; she managed to crawl up the low wall leading into the yard of the cottage, and got into an empty hamper which was lying on its side. Need I say the cat was poor Scobie?

Shutting the dogs carefully out this time, the gentleman returned to the drawing-room and finished his visit. No suspicion that it was Scobie fromwhom he had beaten his dogs entered any one's head. She was supposed to be in her basket safe with her kittens, as no one had noticed her leaving the room.

After a time the little family in the basket began to evince signs of discomfort. Busy, too, showed tokens of uneasiness; sniffing at the basket, running in and out of the house, then returning and lying down on the rug, only to jump up with a little

yelp as if suddenly awoke from sleep, and to run out again. About twilight Scobie's absence was discovered, and search was made for her, but in vain. At last Busy showed increased signs of uneasiness, also of anger. She ran into the drawing-room barking, with the bristles of her neck standing almost upright. Seizing her mistress's skirt she pulled it vigorously.

"Busy wants something," said her mistress, rising and following the dog, who would not be gainsayed.

Pleased with the compliance, Busy led the way to the yard, nor stopped till she reached the hamper. There in a sad and pitiable condition laythe pampered and beautiful pet of the cottage; Martin's only cat-love, Jess's especial favourite, and Busy's bosom friend. When her mistress called her by her name she lifted her head feebly and gave a little faint mew. Busy was in the basket licking her. Her comely sides were bleeding, her beautiful fur torn and discoloured. One paw hung broken and helpless, and one ear had been bitten off. Some warm milk was brought in, which a little brandy was put; as if to show her gratitude for the kindness more seemingly than to satisfy thirst she raised herself slightly and lapped a little, then burying her head in her breast she gave a little shiver, and died.

Many tears were shed over Scobie's fate. Her death was like a public event among the little community. She was put into a neat box and buried in the garden under the loft window. The kittens were brought up by hand, but Busy took possession of the basket, and performed, in every possible way, mother's part to them.

But not one of the kittens, sleek, prettily marked, elegantly formed as they were, could ever compare with Scobie.

M. E. S.

## TO OUR READERS.

WE have prepared a new canvassing bill, and will send you as *many copies together* with specimen *magazines as you can undertake to give away. Many of our dear friends are enthusiastic in their efforts to increase the sale of* SUNSHINE.

## PICTURE STORY.
### No. XCVI.

The best Solution of the ninety-fourth Picture Story is by WILHELMINA C., of Wakefield, aged sixteen. We regret that space cannot be found for its insertion.

HONOURABLE MENTION. — Meynella W., Marie A. M., Georgie E. P., Ellie R. D., Lizzie H., Ethel D., Louisa G., Annie and Emily S. W., Sallie B., Edith G. H., Mary M. L., Alice P., Mary A. H., Margaret E. W., Emily J. G., Hettie D., Annie D., Annie P., Alice B. B., Alice M. J., Bertha H., Clara C., Minnie L. K., Fannie M. T., Margaret P., Edith A. S., Susan G., Louisa H. W., Ada G., Susan C. C. M., Edith F. S., Georgiana F. D., Bertha C. M. S., Eleanor S., Marian A., Nina C. G., Laura M. E. S., Margaret J. M. M., Emily B., Ada K. P., Mary D. M. B., Emily A. M. I, Lilla M. T., Maud M. W., Aimée B., Alice H., Kate M., Margaret E. S., Amy R., H. W. A., Margaret E. N., Mary G., Samuel Frederick T., Frederick W. M. C., Robert S. C., Arthur T. V. B., James A. M.

Mind the Rules.

EDITOR.

AGATHA'S MISTAKE.]

## AUNT MILLICENT'S CHARGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SOLDIER HAROLD," &c.

### CHAPTER XXIV.—MRS. GRAHAM.

MILLICENT lay in a light slumber; her face pale, almost as the pillow upon which it rested, and Mrs. Graham felt touched to the heart to see the change that a few short months had made in her. It was only for a minute, though, that she could thus look at her unobserved. For Millicent woke almost immediately with a great start of surprise at the sight that awaited her. She could hardly believe that her friend was there standing by her side.

"Oh, Mrs Graham, is it indeed you?"

"Yes, my darling. I have come to nurse you. *Please God, you will* soon be well now."

"Oh, it is delightful to have you here! How I have longed for you!" was Millicent's answer, with a great sigh of relief; and she turned on her side and went to sleep again like a weary satisfied child.

Mrs. Graham was a comfort to everybody: so kind and gentle, yet firm and decided, she set every one at rest and ease at once. Mr. Grey's worried, anxious look passed away, and he could enter once more, with his usual zest, into the concerns of his parish and people, secure in the consciousness that matters at home were in good hands.

Everybody said that now Mrs. Graham had come Miss Grey would get well straight away; but for once everybody was mistaken. The days passed, and there was no perceptible change any way; not much pain or suffering, but exceeding weakness, and frequent slumbering. All Millic-

cent's cry was to lie still and rest, she was so weary, so very weary, it was almost a trouble to move a finger even.

At length doctor and nurses woke up to the fact that her strength was slowly ebbing away; and that, as Mr. Dunn said, if they did not mind, she would be "slipping through their fingers."

The first whisper of danger struck fear and sorrow into the hearts of the young ones to whom aunt Millicent was so dear.

Little Hugh crept into her room, and climbing up on to the bed, laid his face close to hers.

"Auntie dear," he whispered, "I have been asking God *so hard* to make you well again; and I am sure He will listen; because He has, you know. I asked Him to make poor Martha happy, and He did; so He will be sure to let us keep you, for He knows how much we love you."

"Yes, dearie," was the soft, low-spoken answer, as the thin hand weakly stroked the boy's bright curls, "in His own good time I trust He will; we must wait patiently. His time is always the best."

The boys' voices were quiet and subdued during those days; no loud noisy play disturbed the house. And their first eager question on their return from school each afternoon was, "How is auntie?" And when the usual answer came, "Much the same; no better," it was painful to see the look of sadness that came over their bright faces.

Ida could not be much at the vicarage just then, greatly as she would have wished to be; her own home duties required her care and attention. Mrs. Gascoigne was more than usually ailing, and needed Ida almost constantly with her to keep her anything like patient and quiet. Then Mr. Gascoigne was confined to the house with a bad hand; he had got a thorn into it, and it had gathered, and was altogether very painful; and nobody could dress it so well as, or with less suffering than, Ida could. Then he wanted her to read to him and amuse him, and prevent him getting dull and moped—at such times when she could be spared from her mother's room.

"I did not think my little daughter would prove such a treasure," he said fondly, one day, as the hand, having been bathed and poulticed, was tied up again clean and comfortable.

"Oh, papa, I do not know what I should have been, certainly not worth any good, if it had not been for dear Millicent," was Ida's answer, eager as she always was to give all the praise to her friend.

"Well, she has worked wonders," said Mr. Gascoigne, "and we owe her great thanks; but if there had not been a good, loving little heart to go upon, Ida, her work would have stood for nothing. Why, what do you think mamma said to me only *yesterday*?—'Ida is a good child; and after all it *is better to have her useful* and affectionate than *the brilliant, accomplished lady* I wished her to *be.' Only think of that, Ida!* That was great praise from mother; because I know she had set her heart on your being a great musician, and having a fine beautiful figure like Sophie Elphinstone."

The tears came into Ida's eyes, and such a happy smile broke over her face.

"Oh, papa, I am so thankful!" she murmured, as she put her arms round his neck and kissed him twenty times, until he laughingly cried out for mercy.

Ida eagerly watched for Basil's return from school, that she might learn the latest tidings of her friend; and when day after day the report was, "no better," her heart sank low within her, and she could but earnestly pray that her life might be spared.

I said every one found Mrs. Graham a comfort, but Agatha was an exception. She had never liked her, even in the old times at Willington; and now it seemed to her distorted imagination as if she was put out of her place, and Mrs. Graham had taken it; and so she disliked her more than ever, and went about with a cloud on her face and a frown on her brow, which Mr. Grey and the boys set down to anxiety for aunt Millicent; but Mrs. Graham knew it for what it was—ill temper.

Had Agatha been really anxious about her aunt she would have tried to help in waiting on her; but she never did. One short visit a day to the sick room was quite enough for her, and that she did for duty, not for pleasure; for she would not believe that Millicent was ill enough to need all the care and attention bestowed upon her. There were many things Agatha might have done in and about the house to set others at liberty to attend on the invalid; but she was too much occupied with her own pursuits to wish to do them.

Of course regular lessons were suspended, but Agatha read a good deal on her own account, and always considered herself very much injured if her private employments were broken in upon.

Mrs. Graham saw it all; and could not but think that if that were her usual manner of behaviour, Millicent must have had a good deal of trouble with her. She bore it in silence for some time—the short, barely civil answers, and the cold, let-me-alone sort of manner; but at last she spoke.

Agatha was walking slowly up and down the gravel walk at the sunny side of the house one morning, with a book in her hand, when Mrs. Graham joined her; and putting Agatha's arm within her own, took a turn or two with her in silence, Agatha still reading, or pretending to read, her book and taking no notice whatever. Suddenly she was surprised by having the book taken out of her hand.

"My dear, I want to talk to you," said Mrs. Graham, in her firm, decided tones.

Still no response from Agatha. She clasped her hands and walked on as if she had not heard. But Mrs. Graham was not to be put off saying what she wished to say by any rudeness whatever.

"Agatha, do you know that we fear, greatly fear, that your dear aunt's strength is failing fast, and that it is more than probable she will not get over this illness?"

"I don't believe it! I don't believe a word of it!" burst from Agatha, after a moment's pause. "Why, aunt Millicent is always saying that it is only rest she wants; and she is resting."

"Your not believing it does not alter the fact. And I think, Agatha, that a little care on your part might have prevented this illness altogether. From what I have seen of you, my child, I can well believe that you have been more of a trouble than a comfort to her. She is but young to have the care and responsibility of you all; and you, as the eldest, might have helped her very greatly; instead of which I fear you have only added to her burden. Perhaps no one has ever told you this so plainly before, Agatha; but I think it only right that you should know it. And do not think me harsh when I say that, unless you alter very much, I shall have to ask Mr. Grey to send you to stay with your friend Bertha, at Willington, for awhile. In the days and nights of anxious watching and waiting, which I fear is only what we must expect now, we cannot do with any one here who has no interest and no sympathy in the household trouble."

Agatha stood still with an expression of astonished dismay, looked into Mrs. Graham's face to see if she really meant what she said, and then broke away from her, rushed up to her own room, locked the door, and throwing herself on the bed, burst into tears.

What could Mrs. Graham mean? She to be sent away at this time of all others! The very idea was too cruel! Papa would never allow it, she was quite sure. But what if Mrs. Graham were to win him over to her side, and make him think it best?

Agatha sobbed herself into quietness at last, and then she sat up and began to think. She could not but see that she had behaved very wrongly; if dear aunt Millicent could have seen her she would have been very grieved; and perhaps—perhaps—they might not have her very long to grieve or to please. And with that thought Agatha's head went down in another torrent of tears; but they were quiet tears of grief this time; no temper and passion in them.

Just before dinner there was a very gentle tap at Miss Grey's door; and when Mrs. Graham opened it, Agatha stood there with a very subdued look.

Mrs. Graham saw at once that her speaking had had some effect; and she took Agatha by the hand and led her into her own room.

"Now, my dear, what is it?"

"I am very sorry; I don't want to grieve aunt Millicent and you. I will try to do better."

"I think you will, dear. Auntie has loved you very dearly, and is worth some love in return. Come in and see her."

Agatha, with her eyes newly opened to the danger that existed, was struck with the change in Millicent's appearance, and wondered that she had never noticed it before; and there, by the sick bed of her aunt, she made the resolution to try to be more of a comfort to her than she had ever been before.

## Chapter XXV.—A Mistake and its Consequences.

Agatha's promise of better behaviour was put to the test that very afternoon. She was sitting by the drawing-room fire, busy over a piece of embroidery which she was particularly anxious to finish, and thinking meanwhile of all she would do for her aunt when she got better again, when the door opened and Mrs. Graham entered hastily.

"Agatha, my child, I shall have to ask you to go and sit in Millicent's room for awhile, for I must go out. Martha's grandmother has fallen downstairs and hurt herself badly; her little brother has just been to tell her, and the poor girl is in a sad way. There seems to be nobody to do anything for the poor old woman, so I am just going to run down with Martha and see what can be done. Nurse is out with the children, so there is no one but you to look after auntie; and you will do it, I know, Agatha."

Agatha felt very much inclined to say she could not; but she remembered her good resolutions, and answered, "I will do my best."

"That is right, dear, I knew you would. There is not much to do; but come up with me, and I will show you."

Agatha slipped her work into her pocket, thinking she could just as well finish it there as here. There was not much to do, as Mrs. Graham had said; the only thing was to give the medicine at the proper time.

"Just at four o'clock, mind, Agatha, to the exact minute. I have set the medicine glass beside the bottle all ready. It is the mixture, mind, not the drops, that has to be given, and just a table-spoonful. I am sorry to leave you, dear, but I think you will manage; and I am sure Millicent would wish me to go and see after the poor woman, as she cannot go herself."

Millicent was dozing as usual; and Agatha established herself in the window with her work, rather pleased than otherwise, after all, with her office of nurse. She went on with the day-dreams she had been indulging in before Mrs. Graham interrupted her; and she was thinking and planning what would happen when aunt Millicent got well again—herself the central figure of the picture, of course; how she would help her and love her, and be all to her that a younger sister could have been.

But in looking forward to the duties of the future she forgot the duty of the present. Four o'clock had struck, and Agatha was so busy with

her thoughts and with her work that she did not hear it. The minutes passed on, and the ticking of the clock, and the quick movement of Agatha's needle as it passed to and fro, alone broke the silence of the sick room; till at last she roused up with a start to find it half-past four.

She was dreadfully begone. Mrs. Graham would be coming back, and find the medicine not given. Not that it mattered much to half an hour, but she had meant to be such a good nurse, and here she was forgetting.

She seized a bottle, not thinking to look if it were right or not, poured out the table-spoonful as Mrs. Graham had told her to do, roused aunt Millicent, raised her up lovingly and tenderly, as Agatha could do when she liked, gave the medicine; and it was only when she carried the glass back to its place that she found she had given it out of the wrong bottle. The drops were to be taken six at a time, and she had given a table-spoonful instead of the mixture, and what the consequences might be she did not dare to think.

She clasped her hands in terror-stricken dismay for one minute; the next she rushed frantically from the room. Nurse, coming in with her little ones from their walk, met her flying downstairs, crying, "I have killed her! I have killed aunt Millicent!"

And for many hours it seemed as if Agatha's bitter, self-accusing words would prove only too true.

All was confusion and dismay; servants running hither and thither, hardly knowing what to do. Mrs. Graham was hastily summoned from the bedside of old Sally Bird, and her prompt, energetic efforts were likely to prove available if anything could. Mr. Dunn was sent for immediately.

But for three days it seemed almost impossible that Millicent Grey could live. She lay in an unconscious stupor; and hour by hour, almost minute by minute, those who watched beside her expected each breath would be her last.

To describe Agatha's feelings during those three days of suspense would be an utter impossibility. It seemed as if a mountain weight of agony and grief and bitter repentance lay upon her heart. If aunt Millicent died she should never look up more. It was all her careless indifference that had brought her to this. No one reproached her; every one was too much taken up to have thought or care for her, and she kept out of the way as much as she could, bearing the crushing weight of her troubles alone.

It was a lesson to her such as would bear fruit all her life. How intensely sorry she was none knew but herself; and how earnestly she prayed that the bitter trial might pass, and her aunt's life be spared!

There were many other prayers offered up *besides* Agatha's; and at length it seemed as if *the answer had gone forth,* the angel with "the *crown of asphodels," had* whispered, "My errand *is not death, but life."*

Inch by inch the battle had to be fought, but slowly and surely the cherished one was won back to life again.

It was many weeks before aunt Millicent was able to leave her bed, and many more before she could come down amongst them all again,—not so strong as she had been before—that she would never be; but sufficiently well to be something past an invalid.

Those weeks of trial Agatha never forgot, nor the resolutions made in a higher strength than her own; and none who watched her humble, tender, unselfish ways could doubt that the past had borne good fruit. Not Ida was more affectionate and loving to Millicent than Agatha was now.

Mrs. Graham stayed for a long time; and when she went away Agatha put her arms round her neck, and said softly, "I am very glad you came, dear Mrs. Graham. I did not want you at first. But I think you opened my eyes to see my naughty self as I really was, and I shall always thank you. I am sure you and auntie have had wonderful patience with me."

Old Sally Bird did not recover the effects of her fall. It was a serious thing for a person of her age; and she was confined to her bed for a long, long time. Martha had to leave her place at the vicarage, and go home to wait on her. Every one was sorry—herself most of all; but Martha knew her duty, and did not hesitate about doing it.

It is whispered in the village that little Rose Eldridge is to take Martha's place: the bare idea of such a thing makes Rose's cheeks glow like her name. But I think, if she does go, Hugh and Eva will be quite as fond of her as they were of Martha.

And now we must bid good-bye to aunt Millicent and her charge, trusting that you, dear reader, will profit a little by this account of their trials and difficulties, and the remedy they found for them.

A. E. W.

## OTTO THE ORPHAN BOY.

By M. Betham-Edwards.

### Chapter VII.—How Otto finds New Friends.

Otto had no sooner caught sight of the young king than he dashed after him like one demented, crying, "My prince, my Prince Eugene!" He did not heed the angry checks of the police, the good-natured remonstrances of the crowd, nor the horses' heels, but on he rushed, determined at any risk to get a nearer look from his beloved prince. How wonderful it was to have found him there, and a king! but there was no time for thinking now, all he wanted to do was to place himself where he might catch the king's eye as he passed on.

A little further up, the road curved, and somehow, he never knew quite in which way he managed it, he continued to be in the front line of spectators when the procession came up.

Otto's face flushed and his knees trembled under him as he found himself face to face with his dear young master. Bareheaded he bent forward, and bending low as if about to kneel, made his reverence, crying in a clear loud voice, "Long live the king!" Was he recognised? He thought so as he met that frank look and that pleasant smile he remembered so well. But when the two princesses drove by he never doubted of their recognition. For the young princess Gertrude looked towards him with an unmistakable look of surprise and pleasure, and motioned to her mother to look too. Both smiled kindly. Otto had thus the joy of greeting his dear protectresses, and the assurance of being remembered. Then they drove on, and he returned to tell Lottie all that he had seen.

But Lottie was too frightened, and tired, and worn to enter into his feelings just then, and seemed at first hardly to believe his story at all.

"How can your prince have been made a king if he is not a king's son?" she asked, incredulously.

"But, dear Lottie, though the young prince never at all expected to be king, I always knew that there was just a chance of his succeeding his uncle. You see if his uncle's sons and their sons died, my Prince Eugene was heir, and this is what must have happened."

"Well, he looks very good and kind, and I hope he will befriend us both," Lottie said, still in an aggrieved tone. "I am sure you need help now that you have no work, and a wife to support."

"I shall see my prince, but ask no favours," Otto answered, stoutly. "I think you and I can make a living without begging for help of any one, dear Lottie. We have health and strength, and, thank God, a little money to start with, so we ought to be well content."

Lottie did not look quite convinced, but the truth was that she was hot and tired, and as soon as they had rested in a cool little inn, and partaken heartily of some good bread and cheese and ale, she could talk of the king as enthusiastically as Otto himself. They could hardly talk of anything else, even when gazing at the wonderful things in the shops. That day and the next they devoted to sight-seeing, and had they been rich young people, with plenty to eat and drink for the rest of their days, would doubtless have gone on sight-seeing for weeks. But they were both of a practical turn of mind, and determined to look about for employment at once.

What Otto wanted was a school, with a snug little cottage, a garden, and a cow. He loved the duties of a schoolmaster, and Lottie, too, was used to the management of a school-house, and with the help of a girl they could keep a flock of geese, a pig or two, and perhaps make their own cider. Yes, they must find a school. But just then there seemed more schoolmasters than schools, and they had tried so many times in vain, and spent so much time in trying, that their patience was getting exhausted, when a sudden piece of good news came. A schoolmaster's place had just been vacated a few miles off, and it would be awarded to the one who could present the best testimonials.

Here was an occasion when the king's help might fairly be asked; so Otto, after a great deal of pains, drew up a respectful letter to the royal secretary, stating his wishes, and enclosing the previous document received from the princess when he left the castle, and also some letters of recommendation from the pastor of his last home, Father Paul's village. In conclusion, Otto begged his respectful homage and remembrance to his former protectors, and informed them that he was married to his late master's daughter, and that his wife's name was Lottie.

So the letter was despatched, and after a few days came the news that his gracious Majesty, holding the orphan boy in kind remembrance, had nominated him to be schoolmaster of the village school, near the Summer Palace, with the further welcome piece of intelligence that the school-house was in readiness for him at once.

Think of Otto's joy! Not only to have obtained his wishes, but to be near his beloved prince! To catch a glimpse now and then of the princess, whose kind face was the bright remembrance of his childhood, and of the Princess Gertrude, who had played with him and petted him, and whose kindness had made him forget that he was an orphan boy. He was at first too much overcome to realize his good fortune, and sat with the letter in his hand like one in a dream; but Lottie prattled on, and seemed to think of everything at once.

"As we have a paddock, we must spend some of our savings upon a cow," she said. "That will bring us in good profit, and perhaps we shall be able to serve the palace with butter and eggs. Of course they pay the best prices for everything."

Lottie, you see, was eminently practical.

"I should be proud to let the king have our eggs and butter for nothing," Otto said. "We must not think too much about money, dear Lottie."

"But you don't think about it at all, so I have to think for both, or we should soon be ruined, husband," Lottie answered. "Well, we shall have plenty to do to buy our cows, poultry, and geese, and look out for a girl to help us. She shall keep the place like wax, and take great pains with the flower-garden; and whenever the king and the princess pass that way they will say, 'What tidy folks Otto and his wife are! They certainly deserve encouragement.'"

"I wonder what we can do for them?" said Otto, thoughtfully. "I think there must be something, Lottie."

"We shall see," said the little housewife, "but

they will be pleased with us, I am sure, if you look after the school, and I after the house; and between us the place is a little paradise."

"You will do your best, I know," Otto said, kissing her affectionately; "only we must not think too much of ourselves, my dear, or it will spoil everything."

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## Chapter VIII.—How Otto entertains a King.

Otto and his wife agreed that their new home was already a little paradise. The king had sent them a lovely white cow, the princess a flock of geese, the Princess Gertrude a score of beautiful hens and cocks, so that they had nothing to buy in the way of live stock. Then the house was undeniably a gem, with its snug parlour and clothes presses, and cool dairy and pantries; and the garden, which was well stocked with flowers, fruit trees, and vegetables, seemed to the young couple the loveliest garden they had ever seen. The schoolroom was large, airy, and cheerful, with prints and maps on the wall; and what perhaps pleased Otto more than anything, his kind friends had filled his bookshelves with books for his own especial use. Were two young people ever so fortunate as they? and they could have sung and danced for joy. It took them several days to arrange everything, to hang up the snowy curtains Lottie had brought from her old home, to dispose of their ornaments to best advantage on the chimney-piece, and their pictures on the walls. Then every drawer had to be scrubbed a dozen times before brought to a whiteness that would satisfy Lottie's eyes, and the copper pans and cooking vessels shone as if made of pure gold. Every day fresh flowers were placed on the window-sill, the garden path swept, and the little flower patches watered, for the king or the princesses might pass by at any time, and who could say when?

And one day when Lottie was busy at her churn, and Otto was busy in his school, there came a clatter of horses' feet on the gravel walk, and a royal outrider dressed in scarlet and gold livery, and Lottie ran in breathless haste to Otto, crying, "The king and the princess!"

There was no time for preparation; Lottie was just able to wash her hands, smooth her hair, and put on a clean apron, when the carriage drove up, and there sat the young king and the princess smiling and bowing to them from the garden gate.

What Otto and Lottie said, indeed, they hardly knew, so overcome and agitated were they, but Lottie was by far the readiest, and would have said a dozen forward things if Otto had not checked her. She wanted their royal guests to *see everything*, the dairy, the poultry yard, and *the kitchen-garden, but Otto* was well satisfied *with their praise of the neat* parlour and the chapel *school-house.*

Otto's little scholars never forgot as long as they lived how one day their master had been called away from his desk to receive the king,—how, soon after, the door opened and there stood a beautiful young lady, dressed in pale lavender silk, with ostrich plumes in her hat, a diamond brooch on her neck, smiling at them, and by her side a tall, soldier-like man, a few years older than the schoolmaster, in brilliant uniform, with a sword by his side, who was no other than the king.

When the children had sung a national hymn the visitors turned to go. Lottie offered a bunch of flowers to the princess quite naturally, and thanked her and the king for the honour they had done them; but Otto had not a word to say.

"How little the princess and I thought, when we found you by the river side so many years ago," said the king, "that you would have been so useful to us! I wanted to make a soldier of you, but the princess was right after all, and I would far rather see you occupied in training children to be good subjects, than in killing our enemies—if we have any."

"I will do my best, my king," answered Otto, bending low; "to you and the princesses I owe everything; I would fain show my gratitude if I am able."

"You will do your duty, I am sure, and your wife too," said the king, "and remember that you have a good friend in me always."

"And in me too," said the princess, almost affectionately. Then they said farewell and drove away, leaving Otto and Lottie plenty to talk about for days to come, you may be sure.

Well, it would take too long to tell what befell our young couple, for as they grew older, and I dare say wiser, the Princess Gertrude married, and went to live far away in a North German state, but sometimes when on a visit to her brother the king they caught a passing glimpse of her. The king married too, amid general rejoicing, and the nation was as much pleased with King Eugene's bride as himself, so bent were they both on doing what was right, and winning the love of their people. Otto and Lottie were very happy in their pretty home.

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## THE NEW STORIES FOR 1877.

"Gracie's Puzzle," a story about Things going Wrong in the World, by the author of "Little Aline." "Philip Dene, of Dene's Court," by the author of "Aunt Millicent's Charge," There will also be a new series of Picture Stories. We shall try to render Sunshine brighter than ever.

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EDITOR.